

*The Report of the
Task Force on Barriers to Women in the Public Service*

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BENEATH THE VENEER

VOLUME 1

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VOLUME I

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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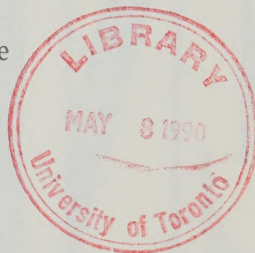
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23 April, 1990

Hon. Robert R. de Cotret, P.C., M.P.
President
Treasury Board of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Sir:

The members of the Task Force on Barriers to Women in the Public Service present herewith the report of the study we were asked in September, 1988, to undertake.


We would like to express our appreciation of the support and assistance we have received from the staff of the Treasury Board and the Public Service Commission, who supplied much of the information on which we have based our recommendations. We also want to thank the deputy heads of government departments and agencies who encouraged their employees to respond to our questions and express their views, and the members of the Advisory Committee of Deputy Ministers who helped us in many ways. Our findings, conclusions and recommendations are, of course, solely our own responsibility.

In particular, we would like to acknowledge the work of our small but excellent staff: Barry Daniels, who directed our research; Cathy Downes, who ensured coordination, consultation and communication; Nina Butcher and her successor, Barbara Bongiorno, who kept the administration tight and smooth, and Micheline Mousseau, who managed our sensitive and voluminous records.

As you suggested, we have asked your predecessor, the Honourable Pat Carney, to write a foreword describing the genesis of this report. We are grateful to her for initiating this project and to you for your continued support and encouragement. We hope you will find our insights useful and our recommendations helpful.

Jean Edmonds
Jocelyne Côté-O'Hara
Edna MacKenzie

Jean W Edmonds
Jocelyne Côté-O'Hara
Edna M. MacKenzie



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TERMS OF REFERENCE

BACKGROUND

1. The Government of Canada is committed to the principle of equal employment of women in the public service and has implemented special programs and measures to facilitate the employment of women.
2. Significant progress has been made to date in the overall participation of women in the federal public service across occupational groups. For example, more women now hold management positions than previously.
3. Because of this progress, women are now moving into jobs where there are few female role models to guide them. As well, data indicate that women remain under-represented in specific occupational groups when compared to labour force availability. Finally, women still tend to be concentrated in the lower hierarchical levels of occupational groups, even in female-dominated groups.
4. Available data therefore suggest that barriers to the employment and promotion of women continue to exist. Also, since many employment opportunities are in traditionally female-dominated areas, there may be attitudinal barriers on the part of women that prevent them from aspiring to senior positions.

OBJECTIVES

1. Identify and rank, in order of importance, the principal barriers to the employment of women in occupational groups where the labour force availability significantly exceeds the proportion of women employed in those occupational groups.
2. Identify and rank, in order of importance, the principal barriers to the promotion of women within occupational groups where the distribution of women across hierarchical levels is significantly skewed towards the lower levels.
3. Identify attitudinal and other barriers that women face as they move into positions where the working environment is male-dominated and where there are no role models to guide women in these positions.
4. In the context of the Government's objectives of fiscal responsibility and control of the growth of the public service, develop recommendations to overcome the barriers identified in 1, 2 and 3 above. Such recommendations will be ranked in order of importance and formulated within the existing provisions of the *Public Service Employment Act*.

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*T*he members of the Task Force on Barriers to Women in the Public Service would particularly like to thank the thousands of women and men who took the time to share their views and experiences. Without their interest and generosity, this report would not have been possible.

APRIL 23, 1990

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FOREWORD

By the Honourable Pat Carney, P.C.

*T*he impetus for the Task Force on Barriers to Women in the Public Service came from my own experience as a cabinet minister in Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's government. I served in three different portfolios — Energy, Mines and Resources, International Trade, and Treasury Board. In all three I noticed very few women at the senior levels of the bureaucracy. When officials gathered in my ministerial office, they were normally all men. The few women who did attend were often in an "acting" capacity.

When I asked where the women were, I was told: "We had one, but she left." Or I was told: "We have one, but she's not ready yet." Or worse: "She's too young." The picture was not totally bleak; in Trade, I had the rare opportunity of heading up at times an all-woman team: Ambassador Sylvia Ostry, Assistant Deputy Minister Jean McClosky, my Chief of Staff Effie Triantafilopoulos and myself. And I found some wonderful women holding down important jobs.

But when I looked at the staffing list, I found very few women in the kinds of jobs that lead to the top levels. So when I became President of the Treasury Board (which is responsible for the management of the public service) I had an opportunity to find out some answers to some key questions: Where were the women? Was there a glass ceiling

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that they could see through, but not get through? I had already learned in my career that women are often their own barrier to advancement, by not perceiving themselves capable of doing the top jobs.

And those women who made it to the top — women who were pioneers and pathfinders — what had they learned? What barriers had they encountered and how had they coped with them? Could that knowledge be passed on to other women coming up through the ranks?

At first, the bureaucracy was cool to this particular ministerial initiative. In a period of downsizing, reduced promotion opportunities and possible male backlash to employment equity initiatives by the Government, few people wanted to tackle the issue of women in the public service. One who did was Huguette Labelle, head of the Public Service Commission. She asked her computers to tell her where the women were. Together we studied the results; women have established themselves in financial fields, so why were only 10% of the auditors women? And why did women comprise 80% of clerks?

Another public servant who supported the idea was Gérard Veilleux, the Secretary to the Treasury Board who found the money required to fund the Task Force. And it was several supportive women deputy ministers who suggested Jean Edmonds to head the Task Force. Jean is a bureaucrat's bureaucrat who became one of the first women senior executives in 1968 and retired from the federal public service with deputy minister rank in 1985. They also suggested Edna

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MacKenzie, who rose to Vice-president of the National Capital Commission from an administrative support job. Jocelyne Côté-O'Hara, a senior executive of B.C. Telephone Co., who has wide experience in both government and the private sector, completed the team. They assembled a small but efficient staff and undertook the most exhaustive study ever made of this subject. This report is the result of their dedication. And I am grateful to my successor, President of the Treasury Board Robert de Cotret, for his strong support of the Task Force efforts.

One immediate result of the Task Force's work has been the amount of discussion generated in the public service about the experiences of men and women in the workplace. Some of these experiences provoke angry reactions; other, more positive responses show how women and the men they work with have been able to move toward equity of opportunity for all.

I am often asked whether I ever encountered a glass ceiling in my own career.

Of course I did.

When and where did I hit it?

It is there in the report, along with the experiences of thousands of men and women surveyed or interviewed for this project.

We hope that these experiences will help others to enjoy successful, productive careers in one of Canada's most important national assets, the Public Service of Canada.

Read on.

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What We Did and How We Did It

Our task was clear at the outset:

- to identify and rank the barriers to the advancement of women in the federal public service;
- to pay particular attention to occupational groups where women were compressed into the lowest levels of pay and status;
- to examine the experiences of pioneers and pathfinders — women who were in non-traditional occupations or in predominately male organizational units;
- to report to the President of the Treasury Board on our findings, and on their significance to the effective management of the federal public service in the 1990s and beyond.

In short, we were to look beneath the surface — past the familiar figures on representation and promotion of women in the public service as a whole, to the specifics of occupations and levels — and past the numbers to the women themselves.

It was clear, also, that we were expected to produce a serious study, well-grounded in research.

We soon learned that no comprehensive study of women in the federal public service had been done for 20 years. More recent studies had dealt only with the Senior Executive Category or were based only on operational data published by the Public Service Commission and the Treasury Board. These studies left unanswered the questions posed to the Task Force.

We needed to plan a research program that would lead in the end to a credible, readable, practical report to the President of the Treasury Board.

To do that, we had to define our boundaries very clearly. We agreed that we were to deal with:

- discrimination, but not all discrimination and not only discrimination;
- women's concerns, but not all women's concerns and not only women's concerns;
- management issues, but not all management issues and not only management issues.

Much has been written on these topics in recent years and we wanted to take advantage of the knowledge and views of others: so we commissioned an annotated bibliography in both official languages, looking back five years and continuously updated as we worked. This is included as Volume 4.

For our own research, we decided on a multi-track plan that would be mutually reinforcing. We were not sure what approach would produce the information and insights we needed. If we put all our faith in a survey, we might be thwarted by a low response rate. If we relied only on an interview process, we would have no means of knowing how our findings related to the public service as a whole. If we relied only on analysis of operational data, we did not expect to get very far on the answers to the specific questions we were posing.

As it turned out, all of our lines of research produced results beyond our expectations, and they did prove mutually reinforcing. We commissioned Statistics Canada to conduct a major survey on barriers to advancement in the federal public service, which was carefully designed with the aid of focus groups and was sent to a 10% structured sample of the public service — 10,000 men and 10,000 women. It was a lengthy questionnaire (47 questions) and we were worried about the possibility of low response, so we asked Deputy Ministers to write to members of their departments explaining the nature and purpose of the survey, authorizing them to respond during the working day, and noting that if they were not included in the sample and wanted to contribute to the work of the Task Force, they could send in individual and group briefs.

We need not have worried: 12,044 public servants returned the questionnaire (6,082 women, 5,962 men — a response rate of 60%). Of these, 7,000 responded to the final question (47), which provided space for additional comments; and in addition, 127 individuals and groups not sampled sent in briefs. In Chapter 5 you will find a report on what we learned from the survey. A copy of the questionnaire and a table showing the responses to the questions are included in Volume 2.

While the survey was in progress, we turned to the mass of detailed information available from the Public Service Commission and the Treasury Board about women in the federal public service. The aggregate numbers were easy enough to handle, but our terms of reference required us to deal with specific occupational groups and specific organizational situations. We needed to get below the surface and needed to understand the dynamics of the system, not just its structures. This became a major preoccupation of our Director of Research, Barry Daniels.

Help in this task came from two sources: from the central agencies that are responsible for the data, (the Public Service Commission and the Treasury Board) and Employment and Immigration Canada. The Public Service Commission provided all the data we asked for, and the advice and assistance of its analysis unit. Treasury Board provided the data available from its records and helped with its interpretation and analysis. Employment and Immigration Canada made available to us help from Dr. Phil Fay, whose long experience in labour force analysis produced techniques for cutting through the details to what we needed to know. The results of this work are set forth in Chapters 3 and 4 and in Volume 2.

At the same time, we began the process of interviewing women about their experiences in the public service. We asked them about the barriers they had encountered, the coping methods they had used, and the changes in management practices they would recommend. Some of the interviews were carried out by Task Force members and staff, others through contracts with consulting firms. Some of the women interviewed were “pioneers and pathfinders” — women who were the first to move into an occupation or organization level; some were women who agreed to be the subject of full-blown case studies, where superiors and associates are interviewed as well;

some were “leavers” — women who had left the public service in mid-career; some were retired. We interviewed women of all organizational levels and in all parts of the country.

In all, there were 223 interviews. Most of the women spoke of hurdles that had slowed them down rather than barriers that blocked their way — but almost all were conscious of ceilings pressing down on their aspirations, and many, when faced with an insurmountable barrier, quit. Many had well-thought-out recommendations for change in management style and attitudes, public service systems, and departmental cultures. They were generous with their time and permission to use the material they provided. Much of what we learned from the interviews is found in Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9; more is found in Volume 3.

Men also contributed to our understanding of the issues. They gave us 43 interviews, 11 briefs, and 5,962 responses. Many of the barriers described in Chapter 6 also affect men, and so do our recommendations.

From the time our appointment was announced, we were conscious of interest and concern inside the public service, and among women’s groups, academics, provincial governments, unions and other bodies outside the federal service. We knew we would need the help and advice of all these people as we pursued our task. Therefore, we decided to run a very transparent Task Force and carry out a continuous program of consultation and coordination directed by Cathy Downes.

Inside the federal public service we met with employee groups, management committees, workshops, advisory boards, unions — in fact anybody with an interest in our work who was willing to provide a time and place — often over a brown bag lunch.

Our only formal advice mechanism was our Advisory Committee of Deputy Ministers, five men and five women, who met with us whenever we had something of substance to discuss. They frequently suggested ways to close gaps in our research, and often provided the data or the expert assistance we needed to get the work done. We sought and received valuable advice on our external consultation program from Status of Women

Canada and we were grateful for two solid briefs from the Public Service Alliance of Canada and the Professional Institute of the Public Service.

Outside the federal public service, we met with interest groups and agencies in every province and territory of Canada, and with provincial government bodies and university faculties.

Three times during the course of our work we held short seminars to which we invited members of the Advisory Committee of Deputy Ministers and a few expert advisers. Each seminar was held at a turning point in our progress: the first when we approved the research program and the questionnaire; the second, when the research results were beginning to come in and we began to think about how to structure the report; the third, when most of the major research results were available and we began to formulate our conclusions and recommendations. At the second of these, Dr. Stephen Peitchinis of the University of Calgary reviewed with us his analysis of the experience of women in the Canadian labour force as a whole.¹ A paper he presented at the seminar is included as Annex 2 to this volume.

To avoid re-inventing the wheel, we also undertook a review of the findings and recommendations of other bodies that had studied similar or closely related issues and what had become of their recommendations. As a result, we concluded that our report, to be effective, should be brief and specific and our recommendations few and pragmatic. These you will find in Chapter 10.

At the outset we discovered that even though among the three Task Force members we had 60 years of varied experience in the federal public service, we knew less than we thought we did about how it is organized and how its human resource systems work. For that reason, we include as Annex 1 to this volume an account of the public service and its human resource systems as necessary background for the rest of the report. In Chapter 2 we review the context within which the study was done: the socio-economic atmosphere in which we all live and work.

1 S.G. Peitchinis, *Women at Work: Discrimination and Response*, Toronto; McClelland and Stewart Inc., 1989.

Finally, though we have tried to include, at least in brief form, almost everything we learned that bore directly on our terms of reference, our research has gathered a wealth of material that may be useful to other analysts. The questionnaire survey was carried out by Statistics Canada under the *Statistics Act* and its results are available from Statistics Canada under the rules set forth in that Act. The interview material is subject to the *Privacy Act* as well as the *Access to Information Act*, and we have arranged with the National Archives of Canada to deposit our records in a way that satisfies the requirements of both acts.

We expect and hope that this material will continue to be mined by qualified researchers who will bring their own perspective to bear on the issues we have examined in this report.

CHAPTER 2

The Scene Around Us

In this chapter we will look back at 20 years of changes in the role of women in Canada; at three major reports of the past 20 years and some of the steps the federal government has taken to respond to their recommendations; and at the prospects for continuing change in the Canadian work force and the role of women in it.

The federal public service is entering a decade during which Canadians are expecting it to produce more with fewer resources. At the same time, public service managers are likely to face an emerging work force that looks different and is different. For one thing, they will find a lot more women in it: by the end of the decade, women will account for more than half the labour force.

Women in the labour force are more likely than their mothers to be better educated, to have children at home, to be single parents or part of a two-job family. As both men and women seek a “balanced” lifestyle their attitudes to work are changing and so are their skills.

The public service manager of the 1990s will need to deal with this emerging labour force in the face of predicted shortages of skilled workers in key areas and a labour force that is growing much more slowly than in the past 20 years. In this context, the identification and elimination of barriers to women in the work force becomes a critical management issue, crucial to the manager’s own advancement.

WOMEN IN THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

In the past 15 years there have been some very significant changes in women's participation in the labour force. Almost 58% of all Canadian women work outside their homes, compared with 44% in 1975. In the case of married women, the percentage working outside their homes increased from 42% in 1971 to 60% in 1989. Even more significant has been the increase in labour force participation among women of childbearing age. Between 1975 and 1989, the proportion of women aged 25-34 who are in the paid work force rose from 53% to 76%. For women aged 35-44, and for women aged 20-24, the proportion increased to 77%.

As a result of these trends, women are now 44% of all Canadian workers. In 1975, they represented only 37% of the work force.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, women have been having fewer children. The total fertility rate (the average number of children per woman) has dropped from a high of 3.92 in 1957 to a low of 1.66 in 1987. In some parts of the country, the rate is much lower.

In 1975, only 35% of mothers with pre-school children (children under age 6) were in the work force. By 1989, 62% of mothers with pre-schoolers worked outside their homes. Almost 60% of mothers with children under three are now in the work force.

It is clear that mothers with young children have not entered the paid work force because child-care services were available. All indications are that these women participate in the work force despite the lack of good child care. Health and Welfare Canada estimates that in 1988, there were 232,787 licensed child-care spaces. (A licensed space is one in a family home or child-care centre that must meet provincial standards) In the same year, 928,000 mothers of pre-school children were in the work force, and 568,000 of them had full-time jobs. Most parents who need child-care services must rely on unlicensed, informal arrangements.

In the past 15 years, many of the jobs created in Canada have been part-time. In 1975, only 10.8% of all employed Canadians worked part-time. By 1989, that percentage had risen to 15.1%. The vast majority of part-time workers are women, and it has often been assumed that part-time work

offers a good opportunity for women to combine paid employment with family responsibilities. The data indicate otherwise.

Part-time employment is highest among younger age groups, indicating that many women who work part-time may be combining part-time work with further education rather than childbearing. In 1989, for instance, 23% of women working part-time said they had part-time jobs because they were going to school. The percentage of women working part-time because of personal or family responsibilities has declined from 17% in 1975 to only 14% in 1989.

Of much more significance is the increase in the percentage of women who are involuntary part-time workers. In 1975, for instance, only 11% of women who worked part-time said they were part-time workers because they could not find a full-time job. By 1989, 22% of women who worked part-time would have preferred full-time work.

A Statement by the Economic Council of Canada on Employment in the Service Economy, published in March, 1990 under the title *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs* has this to say:

Since 1975, part-time work has accounted for at least 30 per cent of net job growth in every province except Alberta, Prince Edward Island and Ontario; in Saskatchewan and Quebec, it has contributed over 40 per cent of the new jobs. Involuntary part-time employment — where workers would have preferred full-time jobs if they could have found them — has been increasing as well and now accounts for 24 per cent of all part-time employment. Nearly half of all part-time jobs created since 1981 have been classified as “involuntary” part-time.

Most part-time workers are employed in the traditional-service sector, and the overwhelming majority are either young or female (or both). By comparison with their full-time counterparts, part-time workers are much more likely to be short-time employees, to be non-unionized and to be employed in very small firms. They are less likely to be covered by a range of employee benefits; and in general, they earn less, on an hourly basis, than full-time workers performing similar kinds of work.

Women workers are more highly educated than ever before. In 1986, 53% of Canadian community college and university graduates were women: they have a long-term commitment to paid employment: they no longer drop out of the work force for long periods of time when they have children. Yet women in the work force are still confined to a limited number of occupations and their earnings are significantly lower than those of men, even when they work full-time for a full year.

The educational attainment of women in the work force has improved steadily over the past 15 years. In 1975, only 7% of women workers had a university degree. By 1989, that percentage had doubled. Only 7% of women in the work force have education at the level of grade 8 or less — compared with 15% in 1975.

Overall, women in the work force are actually better educated than men. In 1989, 44% of women workers had some post-secondary education, and a third had either a post-secondary certificate or diploma or a university degree. Of the men in the work force, 40% had some post-secondary education, and 30% had a diploma or degree. In 1989, 11% of male workers had grade 8 or less.

Once in the work force, women now stay in it. Studies undertaken at the beginning of the 1980s indicated that women who were born between 1941 and 1950 had labour force participation rates that rose sharply between ages 14-24 and 25-34. This is a significant departure from the past and parallels the traditional pattern of male participation in the labour force.

Despite their educational attainment and their long-term lifetime commitment to the work force, women remain concentrated in a limited number of occupational categories. In 1989, 57% of employed women were in only three main occupational groups: 30% were in clerical jobs, 10% were in sales, and 17% were in service occupations.

Even within occupations, women are often clustered round the bottom rung of the ladder. For instance, salary data from 1988 showed that average earnings of women clerical workers who were employed full-time for a full year were only 73% of the average salaries of men employed as full-time clerical workers. Only 20% of clerical jobs were filled by men in 1988. Even

in occupations where women predominate, men are likely to hold the best jobs.

On average, women's wages are still considerably below those of men. Women who worked full-time for a full year in 1988 earned an average \$21,918, compared with men's average earnings of \$33,558. Women's earnings were 65.3% of men's.

When all earners are included, women's earnings averaged only 57.4% of men's. The bigger wage gap for all earners is accounted for by the fact that a higher percentage of women than men work part-time.

The wage gap between women and men is narrower for those with the highest education, but the gap is significant at all educational levels. In 1988, the average earnings of a woman with only grade 8 education or less, working full-time for a full year, were 57.1% of the average earnings of a man with the same education working full-time for a full year. A woman with a university degree, working full-time for a full year, earned an average of 72.3% of the average earnings of a man with the same education and a full-time job.

But the typical woman with a post-secondary certificate or diploma, working full-time for a full year in 1988, earned less than the typical man with only a grade 8 education or less.

Evidently, there is still a long way to go.

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE

The Task Force identified some 117 reports and studies related to affirmative action, employment equity and women in the public service but there have been three major reports initiated by governments to examine issues that bear on our terms of reference.

In 1967, the Royal Commission on the Status of Women was appointed to "investigate and report on matters pertaining to the status of women in those areas which fall within the jurisdiction of the federal government." It was chaired by Florence Bird, the first woman to chair a Royal Commission. In 1969, the Public Service Commission appointed Kathleen Archibald to "investigate all issues related to the federal government's role as employer

of women.” Both reports were published in 1970. In 1984, the Royal Commission on Equality in Employment, chaired by Rosalie Abella, issued its report.

The Royal Commission on the Status of Women made 167 recommendations; of these, 24 related to the federal government as employer. They included a review of the classification system, an increase in the number of women in non-traditional work, broader assessment of staffing criteria (giving credit for experience as a volunteer, as well as paid work) creation of bridging programs, the introduction of pay equity, expansion of part-time work and some new structures to implement the recommendations and to monitor progress.

Recommendations of Archibald’s report entitled, *Sex and the Public Service*, included the establishment of an equal opportunity program in the federal public service; recruitment, selection and placement improvements; changes in classification structures and training programs; expansion of part-time work; provision for pension reform; child care; and research and data collection.

The Royal Commission on Equality in Employment (the Abella Report) recommended that federally regulated industries be required by legislation to implement employment equity and recommended improved data collection and proposed improvements in training and hiring. (There were many other recommendations but the ones cited here were specific to the federal public service).

Many major steps were taken in the 1970s and 1980s to give effect to some of these recommendations. In 1971, the portfolio of Minister Responsible for the Status of Women was created in the federal Cabinet and the Office of Coordinator of Status of Women was established to monitor implementation of the Royal Commission’s recommendations. In 1972, the Office of Equal Opportunities was created in the Public Service Commission. In 1973, the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women was established. In 1978, the *Canadian Human Rights Act* prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex and called for equal pay for work of equal value. A Women’s Program was established in the Department of the Secretary of State.

In 1982, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in the Constitution of Canada entrenched the equality of the sexes. In 1983, the Affirmative Action program was introduced into the federal public service and a Women's Career Counselling and Referral Bureau was created at the Public Service Commission. In 1984, Labour Canada established the Equal Pay Program, applied to federally regulated industries. That same year saw the establishment of the Women's Advisory Committee to the President of the Treasury Board on Employment Equity. In 1985, Employment Equity was applied to the federal public service. (This is a systems-based approach intended to identify and eliminate barriers to equality of opportunity in the workplace.) In 1986, two programs were set up: the "Options" Program to encourage women's entry into non-traditional occupations and the Federal Contractor's Program, which requires federal suppliers with 100 or more employees tendering on contracts over \$200,000 to commit to implementation of Employment Equity as a condition of bidding.

These are by no means all the steps that have been taken by successive governments which are based on the fundamental assumption that equality of opportunity for men and women is possible, desirable, and necessary. They have done much to level the playing field for women in the work force.

A LOOK AT THE FUTURE

Both the population and the labour force will continue to grow; but the labour force, which grew at a rate of 300,000 a year during the 1970s and 200,000 a year during the 1980s, will grow only 180,000 a year in the 1990s, according to *Success in the Works*, a report issued by Employment and Immigration Canada in 1989. The proportion of women in the labour force is likely to continue its rise from 34% in 1971 to 41% in 1981 and 44% in 1989. Within this decade we can expect a labour force equally balanced between men and women, and within the 1990s women may become the majority in the labour force, as they are now in the population.

Such projections depend, of course, on the assumptions made about the continuing rise in the participation rate (the percent of women who choose to join the labour force) and also whether men over 55 continue to withdraw from the labour force. The likely assumption is that Canadian women's

participation rate will continue to rise at the present rate, or faster. Another reasonable assumption is that both women and older men will be more sought after by employers as young male entrants to the labour force become scarce. It is not solely for reasons of goodwill that McDonald's is recruiting older workers.

Charting Canada's Future, a publication of Health and Welfare Canada, points out that

Because the baby boomers are now of working age, Canada has achieved the highest proportion of its population in the traditional labour force ages in its history. The proportion of the population under 15 and over 65 has been declining steadily since 1961, and it will continue to decline until 2011, when the first baby boomers reach age 65. At current fertility rates, this ratio will begin to increase in 2011, but unless an increase in fertility increases the number of younger dependents, it will remain below the 1961 level through at least the next 45 years.

The labour force dependency rate (the number of people outside the labour force divided by the number in the labour force) has been falling even more rapidly than the proportion of the population of labour force age. This is largely because of increasing participation of women in the labour force. The ratio now stands just under 1.2 dependents for each member of the labour force. This will continue to drop in the 1990s, especially if women's participation in the labour force continues to rise; but the dependents are less likely to be young children than they were in the 1980s, and more likely to be elderly parents. Many middle-aged couples now have more elderly parents than they have children.

Two more points about the future should be briefly noted.

The very nature of work in Canada is changing, in part because of technological change in such industries as telecommunications, in part because of the structural changes resulting from "globalization." Bright, well-educated "knowledge workers" who are adaptable and resourceful will be needed. Employment and Immigration Canada forecasts that 64% of all jobs created in Canada between 1986 and 2000 will require more than 12 years of education and training and almost half of these jobs will require more than 17 years of education and training.

The prospect of shortages of such workers is not confined to Canada. The *Economist* (12 January 1990) says:

Soon there will not be enough skilled workers to go round. Companies everywhere need to sharpen up to attract them...

The demographic time bomb may be well hidden. For a start a small recession in the early 1990s, should it come, will lengthen dole queues again. But unless the world economy goes badly wrong, the labour shortage is sure to worsen in the 1990s. Consider:

... America's work force will grow by only 15.9 million (1.2% a year) in the 1990's compared with 22.2 million (2.2% a year) in the 1970's and 18.3 million in the 1980's (1.6%). There will be an absolute fall in the number of people between 16 and 24, while the proportion of American workers over 35 will rise from 39% today to 49% by 2000.

... The population of the European Community will stay at around 325 million (assuming no additions to its 12 member countries). But there will be many fewer young people and many more over-65's...

Statistics tell only part of the story. Anecdotal evidence of a tightening labour market abounds.

It's encouraging to note that *Shaping the Future Public Service*, a report by the Treasury Board Secretariat, demonstrates that the federal government is aware of these hazards:

Demographic trends indicate that there could be a future shortage of workers with the skills necessary to fill the demand. Competition between the private and the public sectors for qualified workers would then intensify. It may be difficult for the federal government to recruit and keep highly skilled employees. This potential challenge raises thorny issues of compensation, benefits, classification, staffing, and accountability.

Not to mention the under-utilization of women in the work force.

The next chapter will look at where the women currently are in the federal public service. To understand this chapter, some knowledge of the classification and promotion systems in the public service is helpful. If you are not familiar with these and the other personnel systems at work in the public service, turn to Annex 1 of this volume, entitled "The Bureaucratic Machinery."

CHAPTER 3

Where the Women Are

In this chapter we examine the distribution of women in the occupational groups and categories described in Annex 1. In particular, we take a look at three aspects of the distribution of women. These are —

- **Representation:** The extent to which women are present in each occupational category and group;
- **Concentration:** The extent to which women appear to be predominantly employed in certain specific occupational areas; and
- **Compression:** The extent to which women in any given group are largely to be found at the lower classification levels of the group.

Statistical information on the distribution of women by group and category is also provided in Volume 2.

The federal government employs approximately 215,000 public servants. The exact head count varies, since the way in which “public service” is defined varies from one authority to another. For example, short-term employees may be included or omitted; employees not appointed under the PSC’s competition rules may be included or not. An explanation of the differences is given in the Public Service Commission’s Annual Report.¹ By any count, the population of the public service has decreased in recent years as a result of the Government’s restraint measures, and is now roughly the same size as it was in the early 1970s.

Approximately 93,000 public service employees (about 43% of the total) are women.

¹ *Public Service Commission Annual Report, 1988, p. 72 et seq.*

REPRESENTATION

“Representation” refers to the extent to which women are present in each occupational area, and is normally expressed simply as the percentage of women in that area. The “area” may be the federal public service as a whole, a particular occupational category, or a specific group within that category.

Labour force availability

In looking at the representation of women in any given area, it is important to look also at the total number of women available for work in that area. Naturally, the public service cannot recruit large numbers of women into a particular group unless the labour force contains a sufficient number of women with the education, training and experience needed to qualify for that group; in other words, unless the labour force availability for the particular occupation is high enough. Percentages used in this chapter are taken from Statistics Canada’s 1986 Census of Population “Women in the Experienced Labour Force,” and give approximate comparisons only. As Chapter 2 has demonstrated, recent trends show sharp increases in the rate at which women are graduating from Canadian universities, and in the rate at which women are entering the labour force.

Representation by category and group

There are six occupational categories in the public service. These are: the Management Category, the Scientific and Professional Category, the Administrative and Foreign Service Category, the Technical Category, the Administrative Support Category, and the Operational Category.

Appointments to senior-level positions of the public service are also made by a procedure known as “order-in-council,” which involves direct appointment to the post on the authority of the Prime Minister of Canada. It is used for the placing of deputy ministers, members of agencies, boards and commissions, judges, and heads of post abroad. Data concerning this group appear in Chapter 7.

The Management Category contains only two occupational groups, the Senior Management (SM) and the Executive (EX). The category represents the upper echelon of public service management. The salary band for the

category as a whole runs from \$56,200 (the lower level of the SM pay range) to \$111,700 (the upper pay limit for an EX-5).²

Most employees enter the category by promotion to SM from the upper level of an occupational group in one of the other categories. In particular, the Scientific and Professional Category, and the Administration and Foreign Service Category serve as “feeder groups” to the SM. The upper classification levels of many groups in these categories are considered equivalent to the SM Group.

In December 1988, the Management Category included 4,283 employees. Although the number of women in this category has increased considerably in recent years, women still represent only 12% of the total, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1			
Management Category			
Group	Employees		
	Total	Women	% Women
Senior Management (SM)	1,835	258	14
Executive (EX)	2,448	244	10
Total Category	4,283	502	12

The Scientific and Professional Category contains 29 occupational groups. As the category title suggests, the work is generally related to specific disciplines. Entry-level qualifications normally include a degree in the group’s area of specialization, and admission to some groups may require an advanced degree and/or occupational certification (for example, bar membership; licence to practice; registration). Entry-level salaries range from about \$18,000 to over \$50,000, according to the amount of training and degree of specialization required. Upper-level salaries also vary with

2 Salary ranges shown in this chapter are taken from Rates of Pay in the Public Service of Canada, September 1989 edition, published by the Pay Research Bureau of the Public Service Staff Relations Board.

Table 2
Scientific and Professional Category

Group	Employees			Labour Force
	Total	Women	% Women	% Women
Actuarial Science (AC)	3	0	0	36
Agriculture (AG)	313	56	18	29
Architecture & Town Planning (AR)	321	43	14	19
Auditing (AU)	3,749	482	13	41
Biological Sciences (BI)	1,147	258	23	37
Chemistry (CH)	420	105	25	27
Dentistry (DE)	30	2	7	14
Defense Science (DS)	565	49	9	33
Education (ED)	1,933	956	50	69
Engineering & Land Survey (EN)	2,869	136	5	7
Economics, Sociology, Statistics (ES)	2,421	591	25	29
Forestry (FO)	151	10	7	31
Home Economics (HE)	40	39	98	96
Historical Research (HR)	289	97	34	78
Law (LA)	888	319	36	22
Library Science (LS)	530	358	68	77
Mathematics (MA)	189	53	28	36
Medicine (MD)	273	47	17	21
Meteorology (MT)	593	62	11	11
Nursing (NU)	1,454	1,278	88	95
Occupational & Physical Therapy (OP)	31	29	94	85
Physical Sciences (PC)	900	149	17	12
Pharmacy (PH)	62	24	39	51
Psychology (PS)	138	41	30	60
Scientific Regulation (SG)	493	111	22	14
Scientific Research (SR)	2,122	132	6	14
Social Work (SW)	109	44	40	71
University Teaching (UT)	235	7	3	34
Veterinary Medicine (VM)	636	94	15	35
Total Category	22,904	5,572	24	36

the discipline. The top pay range of some highly-specialized groups (Medicine, Law) exceeds \$100,000.

In December 1988, the category employed a total of 22,904 persons, including 5,572 women, 24% of the total. Table 2 shows the distribution of women in the various groups of the category.

The Administrative and Foreign Service Category includes 13 occupational groups. Entry-level requirements are generally less rigorous than those of the previous category, though most groups within the category require a diploma or equivalent qualification. Salaries range from an entry-level \$15,000 (Administrative Trainee) to over \$70,000 at the top level of several groups (SM equivalents).

In December 1988, the category employed a total of 56,348 individuals, including 22,090 women, about 40% of the total, distributed as shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Administrative and Foreign Service Category

Group	Employees			Labour Force
	Total	Women	% Women	% Women
Administrative Services (AS)	11,073	5,252	47	28
Administrative Trainee (AT)	58	33	57	n/a
Commerce (CO)	1,870	320	17	21
Computer Systems				
Admin. (CS)	4,092	990	24	31
Financial Admin. (FI)	2,489	753	30	39
Foreign Service (FS)	1,110	189	17	28
Information Services (IS)	1,337	731	55	47
Organization & Methods (OM)	665	198	30	17
Personnel Admin. (PE)	2,849	1,516	53	45
Program Admin. (PM)	25,979	10,305	40	28
Purchasing & Supply (PG)	2,213	702	32	24
Translation (TR)	1,057	557	53	65
Welfare Programs (WP)	1,556	544	35	68
Total Category	56,348	22,090	39	32

In the Technical Category there are 13 occupational groups. Entry-level qualifications normally include a technical diploma. For entry to some groups, candidates must pass a special selection process, which may include aptitude and initiative tests (for example, the Air Traffic Control Group). Entry-level salaries range from \$15,000 (General Technical) to over \$40,000 (Aircraft Operations, Ships' Officers). The top-level salaries of some groups exceed \$70,000.

There are 26,200 people employed within the category. Women account for only 14% of this total. Distribution of women within the groups is shown in Table 4.

<div> Table 4 Technical Category </div>				
Group	Employees			Labour Force
	Total	Women	% Women	% Women
Air Traffic Control (AI)	1,985	69	4	n/a
Aircraft Operations (AO)	609	25	4	n/a
Drafting & Illustration (DD)	1,605	252	16	19
Educational Support (EU)	23	17	74	n/a
Electronics (EL)	2,925	52	2	10
Engineering & Scientific Support (EG)	7,029	1,170	17	34
General Technical (GT)	2,956	492	17	47
Photography (PY)	139	17	13	23
Primary Products Inspection (PI)	2,636	271	10	29
Radio Operations (RO)	1,199	102	9	n/a
Ships' Officers (SO)	1,446	80	6	3
Social Science Support (SI)	2,173	1,144	53	36
Technical Inspection (TI)	1,475	44	3	6
Total Category	26,200	3,755	14	19

The Administrative Support Category includes five occupational groups. The work is generally related to office administration. Starting salaries of all five groups are in the \$15,000-18,000 range, with upper limits in the \$30,000-\$40,000 range, except for the Data Processing Group, which reaches \$45,000. The category contains by far the largest concentration of women in the public service. Occupational groups in this category are sometimes referred to as the “pink collar ghettos” — or more simply the “pink ghettos” — of the public service due to the high proportion of women employed in them. In fact, the category as a whole qualifies well for such a title, as women account for 56,000 (83%) of the approximately 68,000 employees in the category. The issue of concentration of women in specific occupational groupings will be explored in greater detail later in this chapter.

Labour force availability figures could not be obtained for women in these occupational groups.

<div> Table 5 Administrative Support Category </div>			
Group	Employees		
	Total	Women	% Women
Clerical and Regulatory (CR)	50,039	40,035	80
Communications (CM)	634	235	36
Data Processing (DA)	2,847	1,955	69
Office Equipment (OE)	402	199	49
Secretarial, Stenographic & Typing (ST)	13,743	13,589	99
Total Category	67,665	56,013	83

The Operational Category is made up of ten occupational groups, most of which are further divided into a wide variety of sub-groups. The General Labour and Trades Group, for example, includes 20 sub-groups; Printing Operations contains seven. Pay ranges are difficult to compare since many groups include regional variations. The category as a whole generally runs from an entry level of about \$22,000 to an upper range in the mid-forties for most groups.

The category includes a number of skilled trades that have traditionally been seen as “men’s work,” and is consequently highly male-dominated. Women represent just over 5,000 of the total 39,433 positions, or 13% of the category.

Table 6
Operational Category

Group	Employees		
	Total	Women	% Women
Correctional (CX)	4,835	639	14
Firefighters (FR)	1,343	10	1
General Labour & Trades (GL)	14,754	293	2
General Services (GS)	9,381	2,885	31
Heat, Power & Stationary			
Plant Operations (HP)	1,840	18	1
Hospital Services (HS)	1,376	748	54
Lightkeepers (LI)	318	4	1
Printing Operations (PR)	1,038	357	34
Ship Repair (SR)	925	11	1
Ships’ Crews (SC)	2,154	61	3
Total Category	39,433	5,036	13

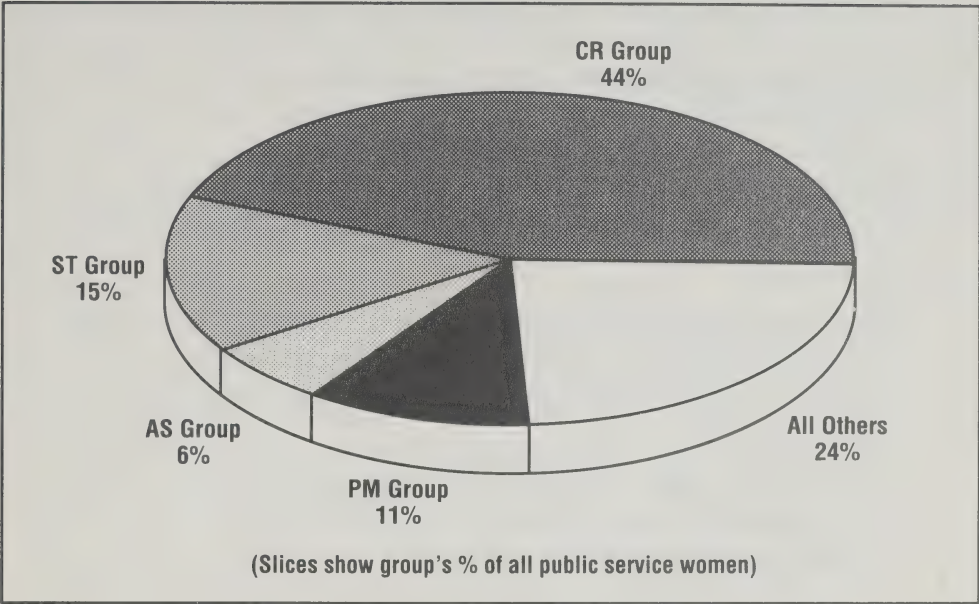
CONCENTRATION

“Concentration” refers to the fact that the 93,000 women in the federal public service are not uniformly distributed across all occupational groups and categories. The great majority of women tend to be found within a small number of occupational groups.

Even a cursory examination of the tables in the previous section makes it quite clear that women are not evenly distributed throughout the occupational groups and categories of the public service. As noted earlier in the chapter, the concentration of women into a small number of occupations has earned some groups and categories the title of “pink ghettos.” A simple examination of the tables also shows clearly that most women in the public service work in the Administrative Support Category, which alone accounts for over 60% of all female public servants. Furthermore, even within the category, women are not uniformly distributed. The majority perform clerical (CR) or secretarial (ST) duties. These two groups employ a total of 53,624 women, representing almost 60% of all female public servants. Thus three out of every five women in the federal public service occupy positions in only two of the 72 occupational groups.

Within the Administrative and Foreign Service Category, two groups account for an additional 15,557 women: The Administrative Services (AS) Group, which employs about 5,000 women; and the Program Administration (PM) Group, which employs over 10,000. In total, four occupational groups account for more than three quarters of all female public servants. This situation is summarized in the following chart.

Figure 1: Concentration of women by occupational group.



The type of work performed by the employees of the CR, ST, PM and AS groups is set out in the classification standards for each group. The following extracts from these standards summarize the nature of the work.

Clerical and Regulatory Group (CR)³

Primary duties

The collecting, recording, arranging, transmitting and processing of information; the filing and distribution of records; and the direct application of rules and regulations.

Secondary functions

- The operation of various types of office equipment and machines, such as typewriters, duplicating machines, calculators, video display terminals, computerized text editing machines, tape recorders and radio telephones.

³ TB/PSC Classification Standard, Nov. 1976.

- Taking dictation and transcribing from notes or a dictating machine.
- Receiving callers and directing them to the appropriate officers.

Secretarial, Stenographic and Typing Group (ST)⁴

Primary duties

The provision of typing, stenographic, secretarial and verbatim-recording services, and the operation of office composing equipment.

Secondary functions

- Serving as a call directory operator and receptionist for an office.
- Composing correspondence, memoranda and reports.
- Setting up and maintaining index file reference material and manuals.
- Performing clerical, filing and accounting duties.
- Reproducing documents, using a copying machine.
- Supervising one or more employees.

Administrative Services Group (AS)⁵

Primary duties

The provision of internal management services.

Program Administration Group (PM)⁶

Primary duties

The planning, execution and control of programs directed toward the public.

COMPRESSION

“Compression” refers to the extent to which women in a given group are largely to be found at the lower levels of that group.

Most occupational groups in the federal public service have a traditional “pyramid” structure, based on classification levels. In any group, higher

⁴ TB/PSC Classification Standard, Jan 1976.

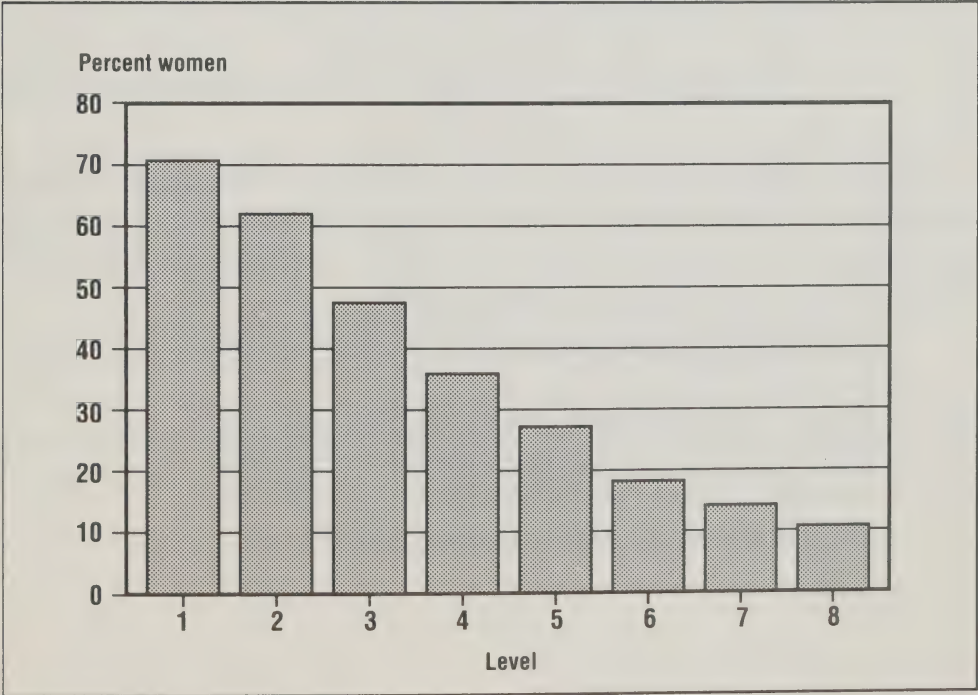
⁵ TB Classification Standard, June 1972.

⁶ TB/PSC Classification Standard, March 1976.

levels normally carry higher degrees of responsibility and authority and, of course, higher rates of pay. Normally, the most junior level contains a relatively large number of employees while higher levels contain progressively fewer. The top level of most groups contains a small number of people — sometimes no more than two or three people. Entry-level employees are usually recruited into Level-1, or into a special developmental level. Career progression then normally involves promotion to successive levels, although many public servants also move from group to group as their careers progress.

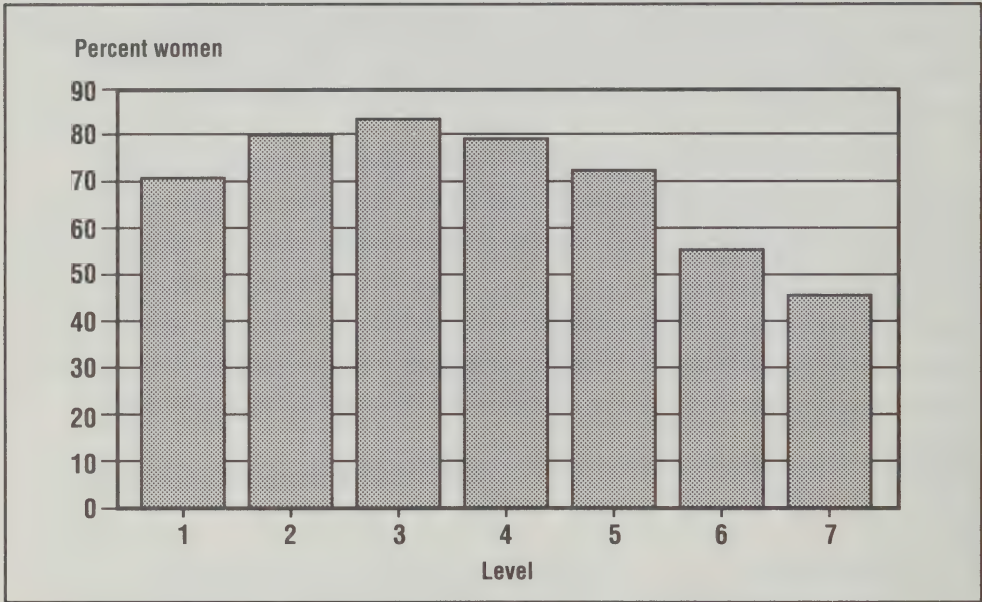
It can be difficult to identify the groups that are compressed. Some groups, it is true, quite evidently qualify. For example the distribution of women in the Administrative Services (AS) Group (Figure 2) shows a typical compression pattern. In this group, over 70% of Level-1 employees and over 60% of Level-2 employees are women, whereas women account for only 14% of Level-7 and 11% of Level-8. In all, more than three quarters of the women in this group are to be found in levels one through three.

Figure 2: Distribution of women by level, AS Group.



However, compression is not as readily apparent in other groups. Distribution of women in the Clerical and Regulatory Group (shown in Figure 3) is difficult to assess.

Figure 3: Distribution of women by level, CR Group.



When the distribution statistics of a single group are examined over a period of time, the proportion of women at each level changes according to a complex set of rules. For example, the Biological Sciences (BI) Group has five levels. Between 1982 and 1987:

- the proportion of women at Level-1 remained essentially the same (37%);
- the proportion at Level-2 increased from 19 to 24%;
- the proportion at Level-3 increased from 11 to 16%;
- the proportion at Level-4 increased from 10 to 12%;
- the proportion at Level-5 decreased from 9 to 4%.

Given this distribution, what could be said about compression in the BI Group? Was compression high in 1982? How did it compare to the compression of other groups — the AS Group, for example? And was it better or worse as a result of the changes between 1982 and 1987? In order to respond to such questions, the Task Force needed a method of measuring compression and putting a number to it.

THE EQUITY INDEX: A MEASURE OF COMPRESSION

The Equity Index measuring system developed by the Task Force is essentially a weighted average. The weighting factor derives from the hierarchical structure of each occupational group. In essence, the proportion of women at Level-1 is multiplied by one; the proportion at Level-2 is multiplied by two and is added to the previous calculation; and so on to the top level in the group.

Readers who wish to examine the mathematics of the index will find details of the calculation in Volume 2, which includes a number of sample calculations. For readers who do not wish to examine the calculation procedures in detail, it is not necessary to know how the index works, but it is helpful to understand what it does — and what it does not do.

The index measures the degree to which the women in a given group are equitably represented at all levels of that group. It is independent of the total number of women in the group, and of the overall proportion of women in the group.

The index of an equitably balanced group is 100. An index above 100 shows that the women in that group are over-represented at the upper classification levels. An index below 100 denotes that the women in that group occupy the lower working levels. The lower the index, the greater the degree to which women are “compressed” to the lower levels of the group.

The Equity Index is a rough-and-ready indicator; it was not designed to be, nor is it required to be, a precise measuring tool. It provides a simple indication of the extent to which the women in a group are uniformly represented at all levels of that group.⁷ It works best for groups with four or more hierarchical levels, and in groups which are not radically out of balance. Groups in which women represent less than 10% or greater than 90% of the total population can produce misleading results.

Since the Equity Index uses a weighting system, it is especially sensitive to the presence of small proportions of women at higher levels. In cases where the number of employees at the upper level is very small, addition of women at this level can affect the index to an extent that may seem out of proportion. (This is sometimes known as the "tyranny of small numbers.") For this reason, where the upper level of a group contains a very small number of employees, the upper level is excluded from the calculation.

Comparison of the Equity Indices of various groups over a period of time can reveal progress (or lack of it) towards equitable representation of women.

Data relating to the distribution of women in various occupational groups were obtained from the Public Service Commission.⁸ The data provide distribution statistics by levels in a number of groups, and compares data from 1982 and 1987. The Equity Indices were calculated for several groups using both sets of data. The results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7 shows not only that women are compressed into the lower working levels of most groups examined, but that there was little easing of this compression during the period 1982-87. In some groups, the index had fallen back during this period, showing that compression had worsened between 1982 and 1987. Recruitment of new employees to a group is normally into the lower classification levels, and this would naturally lower the

7 The index uses representation rates (%). In terms of actual numbers of employees, the majority of women (and men) are normally found at the lower levels of most groups.

8 "Women in the Federal Public Service: A Series of Working Papers, Working Paper #4; Representation of Women in Selected Occupational Groups and Levels"; published by the Policy Monitoring and Information Directorate, Public Service Commission. Spring 1989.

Table 7
Equity Index Comparisons (1982 & 1987)
for Various Occupational Groups

	1982			1987		
	Number	% Women	Index	Number	% Women	Index
Psychology (PS)	24	24.5	110.3	43	31.9	124.9
Communications (CM)	331	42.7	82.5	235	37.1	97.4
Social Work (SW-SWC)	39	38.6	82.6	46	45.5	95.6
Information Services (IS)	535	45.5	90.7	684	53.4	94.5
Organization & Methods (OM)	196	20.9	93.7	201	27.0	89.6
Clerical & Regulatory (CR)		n/a	n/a	40,035	80.0	89.0
Translation (TR)	622	50.3	81.9	545	51.2	87.8
Economics, Sociology, Statistics (ES)	447	18.9	86.9	572	23.8	87.6
Personnel Admin. (PE)	1,271	43.1	81.2	1,452	51.2	87.5
Chemistry (CH)	89	21.9	86.9	97	23.5	82.8
Physical Science (PC)	111	13.7	53.7	147	15.9	57.0
Scientific Regulation (SG-SRE)	60	18.7	53.5	90	24.4	77.5
Financial Admin. (FI)	634	24.5	77.5	714	29.1	77.4
Medical Officer (MD-MOF)	32	11.4	62.7	41	16.6	75.4
Computer Systems Admin. (CS)	654	22.8	69.2	895	23.9	70.2
Program Admin. (PM)	8,002	31.7	63.5	9,274	37.0	68.3
Purchasing & Supply (PG)	434	22.9	63.0	659	30.4	68.0
Welfare Programs (WP)	487	28.0	61.6	526	32.7	65.1
Administrative Services (AS)	4,323	42.5	59.6	5,082	45.9	64.2
Education Services (ED-EDS)	132	31.4	69.6	111	31.0	61.5
Biological Sciences (BI)	197	19.0	67.0	240	21.4	61.0
Social Science Support (SI)	987	48.1	58.7	1,115	51.7	57.8

Equity Index for that group. However, this should be offset by increased proportions of women attaining higher classification levels through promotion. This does not appear to be happening in most groups.

It should be emphasized as a general point that a high Equity Index does not denote that the group is equitably balanced. An equitably balanced group produces an index of 100. Any deviation from this, up or down, indicates that men and women are not represented in equitable proportions at all levels of the group.

The high index obtained for the Psychology Group indicates that women in this group are over-represented at the upper levels of the group. To put this into correct perspective it must be noted that this is a very small occupational group, containing only 43 women (32% of the total). Although the group has five classification levels, the upper two levels contain only eight individuals (one woman). To avoid the "tyranny of small numbers," both upper levels were omitted from the calculation. Psychology therefore represents a very small group, with only three hierarchical levels, and is a unit in which the validity of the Equity Index is borderline.

Table 7 indicates that, as of 1987, almost all groups examined show some degree of compression.

The Equity Index for the Public Service as a Whole

The Equity Index measures the degree to which women are evenly represented at all levels of a hierarchical structure. The structure for which the index was originally intended is the classification hierarchy of an occupational group. As described previously, most such groups in the public service consist of a number of classification levels — normally between five and eight. However, the index can work equally well if salary ranges are substituted for classification levels. The proportion of women at each level (salary range) can be used to calculate the Equity Index for any given group. This is a convenient way to assess the degree of compression in the public service as a whole. Table 8 shows the proportion of women in the federal public service by salary range.

Table 8
Distribution of Public Servants by Salary, in 1988

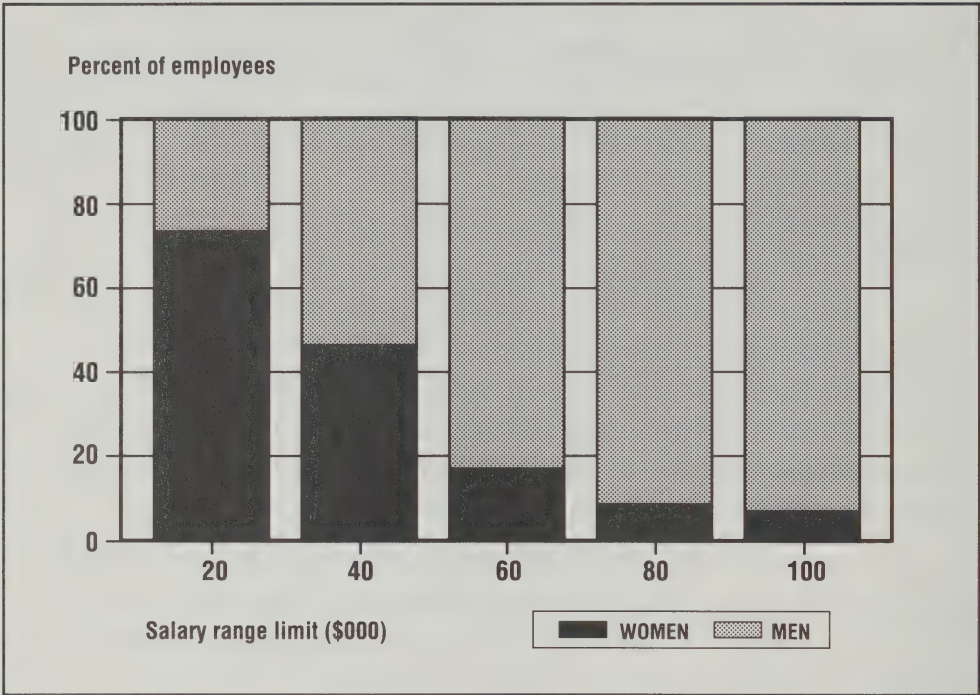
Salary band	Men		Women	
	Number	%	Number	%
under \$20,000	2,637	26.9	7,160	73.1
\$20,000-\$40,000	69,219	53.4	60,492	46.6
\$40,000-\$60,000	31,928	81.5	7,240	18.5
\$60,000-\$80,000	6,867	90.6	710	9.4
\$80,000-\$100,000	1,468	92.6	118	7.4

Ranges of \$20,000 were selected to provide a suitable number of levels covering the spectrum of public service salaries. Distribution statistics were obtained from the Public Service Commission's 1988 Annual Report. Since only a small proportion of public servants earn in excess of \$100,000, this "level" was not included in the calculations.

Table 8 summarizes the effect of women being concentrated in lower-paid occupational groups and being compressed to the lower classification levels of the groups. The net result is that, in 1988, women accounted for almost 50% of public servants making under \$40,000 per year, but only 17% of those making over \$40,000.

The same data are shown graphically in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Distribution of men and women by salary band.



This chapter has explained the use of the Equity Index to measure compression. The index of a balanced group, in which men and women are equitably represented at all levels is 100.

Using the data from Table 8, the Equity Index for the public service as a whole in 1988 was 49.

What Moves the Index?

The process by which men and women move up from level to level within the federal government is complex. To fully understand how they advance in the public service requires much more than a comparison of “snapshots” taken at five-year intervals. Such an understanding demands a more sophisticated approach, and this will be explored fully in Chapter 4 of this report.

Some factors, however, are of obvious importance in determining the rate at which the Equity Index increases with time. There is no doubt, for example, that the overall rate of promotion (for women and men) plays a major part. A period of expansion such as the Government experienced in the late 1960s through the mid-1970s, presents an opportunity for rapid improvement of the index. A period of restraint, such as the Government experienced through the 1980s and continues to experience, presents little opportunity for rapid movement of the Equity Index. As long as the overall rate of promotion for men and women is low, the relative rate of promotion (women:men) is not of great significance. In simple terms, when men are receiving very few promotions, the fact that women are receiving 5% more than men is not going to make a lot of difference to equity in the short term.

A second factor that could account in part for the lack of progress of women attaining the higher levels of various groups is the rate at which women are leaving those levels. In attempting to fill a leaky bucket, it makes good sense to first plug up the holes. The rate at which women are leaving the public service therefore merits serious study.

Data relating to leaving rates are shown in Table 9. These data give no indication as to the reasons why women leave the public service. Undoubtedly, there are a wide variety of possible explanations, including family care responsibilities. Women's reasons for leaving are important to an understanding of equity in the federal public service, and will be explored in later chapters of this report.

The data in Table 9 are presented as a ratio of women to men, on a per-capita basis. In terms of actual numbers of leavers, more men than women leave — simply because men outnumber women in all categories except Administrative Support. In terms of the rates at which people leave (separations per hundred persons) women have been leaving the public service at greater rates than men for years, as the table shows.

Table 9
Separation Ratios Per Capita (Women/Men),
1982-1987

Category	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
Management	0.47	0.91	0.56	0.44	0.57	0.31
Scientific & Professional	2.75	2.66	2.66	2.32	2.38	2.42
Administrative & Foreign Service	1.05	1.10	1.02	1.04	1.12	0.97
Technical	1.53	1.81	1.56	1.63	1.70	1.65
Administrative Support	1.16	1.14	1.00	1.09	1.09	1.03
Operational	1.82	1.46	1.36	1.30	1.51	1.38
All categories	1.38	1.47	1.31	1.42	1.45	1.36

The separation rate includes all types of separation except lay offs. It therefore includes term employees leaving at the end of their period of employment. Since such positions are most often filled at the lower classification levels, the separation rate of term employees should not have a major impact on progress towards equity. However, the number of women leaving the public service from the mid-officer levels is undoubtedly one factor responsible for the slow rate of progress.

Of particular note is the rate at which women are leaving the Scientific and Professional Category. For several years, this has averaged between two and three times the per-capita rate of men. This category is one in which women leaving from the middle and upper levels could have a particularly high impact, since there are often very few women at these levels in the first place. For example, there are six female Level-4 statisticians; seven Level-6 meteorologists; seven Level-3 research scientists; four Level-2 pharmacists. There is one female Level-5 patent examination officer.

As noted earlier, the reasons for which women are leaving these crucial groups and levels are important. If they are leaving the public service to take up key positions in business, industry or the academic community,

then an argument could be made for continuing the trend. Many would suggest that if the federal government is serving as a training ground for women who leave to take up high-level posts in the private sector, this is a legitimate and valuable role for the Government to play. But if women are leaving for negative reasons — frustration with the system, for example — then such an argument loses its credibility. The reasons for leaving therefore must be determined. This will be addressed in Chapter 9 of the report.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has examined the distribution of women in the federal public service in terms of three aspects of that distribution: representation, concentration, and compression.

Representation

Overall

Women represent approximately 43% of the public service population — a figure which is almost identical to the representation rate of women in the Canadian labour force.

By category

In terms of representation by category, women in the federal public service show a similar order of magnitude to the labour force rates. They show a higher percentage representation in the Administrative and Foreign Service Category and lower rates in the Scientific and Professional and the Technical categories.

By occupational group

The representation rate of women varies greatly from one group to another. When compared to the representation rates for women outside the public service, some groups show much higher rates and others show very low rates. Representation of women is very low (single-digit percentages) in 20 of the 72 occupational groups.

Concentration

Women in the public service are concentrated to a high degree in a small number of occupational groups. Three quarters of all women are to be found within four of the 72 groups. One group alone — the Clerical and Regulatory Group — employs over 40,000 women, accounting for some 44% of all women in the public service.

Compression

In almost all occupational groups, the majority of women occupy the lower levels. Few groups were found where women predominate at the upper levels. Examination of distribution figures from 1982 and 1987 suggests that the degree of compression to the lower levels is easing in many groups as women obtain promotions to the higher ranks, but the rate of improvement is very slow, and some groups appear to be moving backwards. This will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

Career Paths and Patterns: Where the Women Are Going

This chapter presents a projection of future distributions of men and women in the federal public service based on present trends by looking at the dynamics of the promotion/appointment process.

Chapter 3 examined the distribution of men and women in the public service by looking at: representation, concentration, and compression.

In particular, examination of compression suggested that between 1982 and 1987 there had been little improvement in the ratio of women to men at the upper levels of many groups studied. In fact, in some groups, compression appeared to have become more pronounced over the period.

In examining the distribution of men and women in many occupational groups, there is an apparent anomaly between the high proportion of women at the lower levels and the slow rate of progress towards equitable balance. After all, a prime source of employees in any given level of any group is promotion of employees from the level below. Since women often predominate at the lower levels (and in some groups, receive higher rates of promotion than men) it would seem logical to assume that women will rapidly fill the levels above them.

Using the Administrative Services (AS) Group to illustrate, in 1982 the first level of the group contained three women to every man. Statistically, given equal or better promotion rates, women should take at least three out of every four places at Level-2 filled by promotion from Level-1. Similarly, women outnumber men at Level-2, and should consequently move by promotion to Level-3 in high proportions.

This belief stands at the heart of the “laissez-faire” approach to employment equity. That is, having recruited women in large quantities into the “feeder” levels, time and natural progression will see to the balance.

The Task Force needed to know whether laissez-faire represented a realistic approach.

As Chapter 3 pointed out, projections of future distributions based on simple observations can be misleading. A comparison of a series of “snapshots” over an interval of time does not take into consideration the dynamics of the process, in which men and women move into and out of each level of each group according to a complex set of interacting factors. A proper examination demands more complex tools. This chapter examines the consequences of the laissez-faire approach in detail — by means of a computerized model — and attempts to show what will happen to the representation of women in various groups if present trends continue unchanged over the next two decades.

Several factors influence the way in which, in any occupational group, the proportion of women to men changes over a period of time. These include:

The initial distribution

One of the most important factors affecting progress towards equitable distribution of men and women in an occupational group is the starting-point distribution. The greater the imbalance — particularly at the more senior levels of the group -- the longer it will take for women to achieve balanced representation at all levels of the group.

The overall flow of people into and out of a level

The overall flow of people into a particular level is also very important. If nobody enters or leaves the level, the distribution will obviously remain unchanged. On the other hand, a high turnover presents the potential for more rapid change of the ratio of women to men.

The relative rates of promotion and other methods of appointment into the levels of the group

Another important factor is the relative promotion rate of women to men into each level. For example, if the promotion rate for women from one level to the next is twice the rate for men, changes to the distribution are likely to occur more rapidly than if the promotion rates for women and men are the same. A similar situation applies to those who come into the level by other appointment methods.

A high rate of leaving a level may be a healthy sign (for example, when such moves are related to a promotion to the next level of the group, or to another group) or it may indicate frustration with barriers to advancement. But if women leave the upper levels of a group at a higher rate than men, for any reasons, the proportions of women at these levels are obviously reduced.

A SIMULATION MODEL

With the preceding factors in mind, a simulation model was developed to examine how changes to the factors affect the proportions of women to men at each level of a group over a period of time.

To keep the model simple, the following assumptions were made:

- The total number of employees at a given level does not change from one year to the next (that is, no major changes in the occupational group; no major downsizing or expansion).
- The overall flow rates and ratios (women to men) for the year 1988 also apply in future years.

Details of the simulation model are provided in Volume 2.

Essentially, the model uses the factors which have determined the rate of advancement of men and women over the past year, and examines what will happen to the distribution of men and women if these factors remain unchanged. The model starts with the initial distribution (that is, the numbers of men and women at each level of that group), and projects the situation at year end for each level using the formula (see Volume 2 for details).

The resulting distribution (proportion of men and women at each level) can then serve as input for the following year, and the process can be repeated as often as required.

APPLICATION OF THE MODEL

The Administrative Services (AS) Group contains over 5,000 women, representing a good proportion of the total group (45%) and covering a wide range of job functions. The group therefore serves well as a test case. The proportions of women and men at each level of the group were fed into the model along with the factors shown previously. Representation ratios for successive years were calculated. The predicted proportions after 20 years are shown in Table 10.

Table 10
Representation of Women by Level,
Administrative Services Group

Level	Initial distribution		After 20 years		Increase in representation of women	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	percentage points
AS-1	1,309	73	1,429	80	120	7
AS-2	1,611	62	1,772	70	161	8
AS-3	1,017	49	1,262	60	245	11
AS-4	585	38	763	47	178	9
AS-5	360	28	480	37	120	9
AS-6	205	20	342	34	137	14
AS-7	80	14	84	14	4	0
AS-8*	—	—	—	—	—	—

* excluded from calculation due to small number of employees at this level

Table 10 shows that if present trends continue unchanged, women will represent higher proportions at all levels of the AS Group by the end of the 20-year period. The gain at the AS-7 level, however, is minimal. This is primarily due to the fact that women leave this level at approximately four times the rate of men.

The table also shows that women should represent a majority of the group as a whole, accounting for 56% of the group’s population.

Although there are obvious gains in the representation of women within the AS Group, there is still an imbalance. After 20 years, women still appear to be compressed into the lower levels of the group.

Applying the Equity Index to the distribution figures confirms this impression. Over a 20-year period, the index rises from 64 (the present value) to 69. As noted in Chapter 3, the Equity Index of an equitably balanced group is 100. This is summarized in the following table.

Table 11		
Projected Changes in Representation Rate and Equity Index for Women in the AS Group		
	Present	In 20 years
Representation (women as % of total employees)	46%	56%
Equity Index	64	69

Application of the Model to Other Occupational Groups

The model was applied to a sample of occupations chosen to represent a diversity of characteristics. The results are shown in Table 12.

Table 12				
Distribution of Women in Selected Groups				
Group	Initial conditions		After 20 years	
	% Women	Equity Index	% Women	Equity Index
Administrative Services (AS)	46%	64	56%	69
Biological Sciences (BI)	24	61	29	82
Economics, Sociology and Statistics (ES)	19	87	30	79
Physical Science (PC)	16	57	39	62
Program Admin. (PM)	37	68	56	83
Purchasing & Supply (PG)	30	68	48	82
Engineering & Scientific Support (EG)	16	69	20	72
Clerical & Regulatory (CR)	80	89	82	91
General Labour & Trades (GL)	2	41	5	38

Table 12 suggests that the distribution of women in the public service will improve, both in terms of percentage representation and balance (Equity Index), but it will move so slowly that none of the groups examined are expected to achieve an equitable balance within the next 20 years.

Projected Representation of Women in the Senior Management Group

In 1988, 261 people entered the Senior Management (SM) Group. Two hundred and forty of these came from other groups within the public service, while 21 were recruited externally. Using the model to predict outflow from each of the “feeder” groups over a 20-year period, it is possible to arrive at the projected distribution of men and women in the SM Group, as shown in the following table.

Table 13
Projected Representation of Women and Men
in the SM Group

Year	Men		Women	
	Number	%	Number	%
1990	1,642	85	289	15
2010	1,232	64	699	36

Table 13 shows that at the present rate of progress, women will still represent only about one third of the SM contingent by the year 2010.

CONDUITS: THE IMPORTANCE OF INTER-GROUP FLOW

The model reveals that women tend to move from one occupational group to another at a rate twice that of men. This is a major factor in changing the distribution patterns of men and women. Over half of the annual inter-group movements of women in the public service take place between five occupational groups, as shown in Table 14.

Table 14
Movement of Women Between
Key Occupational Groups

		movement to				
		ST	CR	AS	PM	SM
movement from	OUTSIDE	1,818	5,844	89	267	5
	ST	—	777	157	37	—
	CR	383	—	370	1,267	—
	AS	4	16	—	101	20
	PM	—	47	46	—	11

These figures show the importance of the Administrative Services (AS) and Program Management (PM) groups as conduits for women to reach the Management Category. Twenty women moved to Senior Management from AS, which includes about 5,000 women, while only 11 were promoted from the PM Group, which contains over 10,000 women. The opportunities for women to be promoted from the AS Group are apparently much better.

CAREER PATHS AND CAREER PATTERNS

Apart from movement into and out of the five occupational groups described in the last section, there are a large number of other routes available to women (and men) who wish to advance in the public service.

In theory, it is possible to move from any group to any other by obtaining the appropriate mix of academic qualifications and work experience, and by applying for job openings at an appropriate level. In practice, as documented elsewhere in this report, many forms of inter-group movement pose problems and some specific exchanges are virtually impossible. Frustration with this aspect of the system is one of the reasons why some women leave the public service.

To examine the options used by women (including the separation option), the Task Force commissioned Statistics Canada to develop and analyze information on the career paths of public servants. Statistics Canada achieved this by means of a "cohort analysis" study.¹ A cohort analysis first selects a group of individuals with certain common characteristics — for example, a group of people of similar age who entered the public service in the same year. It then tracks the progress of the group over a specified time period. This allows the analysts to estimate the effect of a particular difference (such as being male or female) while other factors are constant.

The cohorts selected by Statistics Canada included:

- Persons working full-time in 1978. Career advancement was tracked from 1978 to 1987.

¹ "Longitudinal Career Data for Selected Cohorts of Men and Women in the Public Service: 1978 - 1987." Prepared by the Business and Labour Market Analysis Group, Statistics Canada, Ottawa. November 1989. A detailed summary of the paper is included in Volume 2.

- Persons working full-time in 1982. Their career paths over the following five years were examined.
- Persons in the Senior Management and Executive groups in 1987. Their career advances over the previous nine years were analyzed.

Findings of the study included:

From the 1978 cohorts —

- Women generally left the public service permanently at a higher rate than men, particularly among the younger cohorts with low-to-intermediate pay levels. More exits occurred in the early half of the period (1978-1982).
- Women who left the public service subsequently tended to show a lower rate of growth in earnings than those who stayed in the service.
- Most of those who stayed remained in the same occupational group throughout the period.
- In the Clerical (CR) and other lower-paid cohorts, men advanced more rapidly than women.
- In the intermediate-level groups (Administrative Services, Program Administration, and Economics, Sociology and Statistics cohorts), there was little difference in the advancement rates of men and women.

From the 1982 cohorts —

- Most of those who stayed, remained in the same occupational group throughout the period.
- In the CR and other lower-paid cohorts, men advanced more rapidly than women.
- In all other cohorts, there was no significant difference between the advancement rates of men and women.

From the 1987 (Management) cohorts —

- Although a wide range of occupational groups provided entrants to the Management Category, people entered the category primarily from a small number of groups. These included:

- for men, the Program Administration, Foreign Service, and Economics, Sociology and Statistics groups.
- for women, the Program Administration, Administrative Services and Personnel Administration groups.
- Women rose in the ranks faster than men. This was particularly true of women who reached the EX Group.

LEAVERS

Chapter 3 raised the question of the rate at which women are leaving the public service. It was suggested that this high rate could explain in part why greater numbers of women are not appearing at the higher classification levels of most groups. The simulation model allowed this hypothesis to be tested.

As shown in Chapter 3, the ratio of women to men leaving the service is generally high. Using the model, the simulation was run using the actual rate at which women are leaving, and then repeated using a lower rate of leaving for women. The two sets of results were compared to see whether lowering the leaving rate produced significant improvements in the distribution figures. It was found that the rate at which the Equity Index increases with time is improved significantly in several groups by lowering the rate at which women leave the groups.

To summarize the issue of women leaving the public service:

- Women are leaving the federal public service at a higher rate than men from all categories except the Management Category.
- Due to the small numbers of women in the middle-through-upper levels of many groups, women leaving from these levels is a significant factor in preventing the groups from reaching an equitable balance within a reasonable period of time. Flow-rate analysis confirms that in many groups, reducing the rate at which women leave these groups and levels could significantly improve the rate of progress towards equitable distribution of men and women within these groups.

- Women are not leaving for economic reasons. Cohort analysis shows that women who remain in the public service fare better financially, and the interview series confirms that women left for other than financial reasons.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has looked at the rate of progress of women towards equitable distribution in terms of representation, concentration and compression. In Chapter 3 it was shown that four groups account for three quarters of all women in the public service. This chapter shows that these same groups account for the majority of moves made by women.

The analysis made use of a model² that takes into account various factors influencing the rate of advancement of men and women. Use of the model indicates that the rate of progress towards equitable distribution will continue to be very slow. Over a 20-year projection period, none of the groups examined are expected to reach an equitable balance (defined by the Equity Index) and some groups show increasing compression of women to the lower classification levels. The model was used to establish that women leaving the public service from mid-to-upper levels of certain groups is one important factor in defining the rate at which these groups will achieve equitable distribution.

2 *Research Note: The simulation model used in this analysis and the Equity Index used to monitor compression were developed expressly for the Task Force. Resource limitations prevented the Task Force from developing these analysis tools to the extent they would have wished. The Task Force suggests that the Public Service Commission, in collaboration with other interested parties, consider devoting additional resources to further development and application of these tools as a means of monitoring progress towards equitable distribution of men and women within the federal work force.*

CHAPTER 5

What We Learned from the Survey

The survey of barriers to advancement in the public service, conducted for the Task Force by Statistics Canada, examined the experiences and perceptions of male and female public servants. The questionnaire was sent to a 10% structured sample of all public servants; it drew a 60% response, almost equally from men and women. Details of the design and sampling method, a copy of the questionnaire, and a tabulation of responses are found in Volume 2. This chapter describes what the survey revealed about the issues raised in our terms of reference.

To sift through the mass of data produced by the survey and identify the findings that responded to our terms of reference, the Task Force asked Statistics Canada to commission an analysis of the results. The report of the analysis, by Abt Associates of Canada, focused on:

- the **rate of advancement** for women and men in the public service as a whole and in segments of it;
- **barriers to advancement**: how frequently men and women mentioned specific barriers to advancement, and how men and women differed in the way they ranked barriers;
- **attitudes** of men and women, and how they differed in their responses to statements developed by focus groups.

The information on advancement tended to support and amplify the findings of the operational data, and the information on barriers was consistent with what we had learned from interviews and briefs. The greatest surprise of the survey was the degree to which men and women have sharply divergent perceptions of women's situation in the federal public service, and therefore different attitudes.

ADVANCEMENT

The analysis defines “advancement” as any increase in average salary (adjusted for inflation) between the time the respondent entered the federal public service and the completion of the survey. Some respondents showed no advancement. Those who had advanced were sorted by length of service. The analysis measured rate of advancement by the amount of increase in salary over the same period of service. “Rapid advancers” had a higher salary increase than slower advancers over the same number of years.

The survey showed that women who advance in the public service do so 5% more rapidly than men. This is not true in all categories, however. In the Scientific and Professional Category, for example, women at the junior and intermediate levels advance between 22% and 50% more slowly than men.

Among women, the “rapid advancers” are most likely:

- to belong to a visible minority;
- to have started in a term position;
- to be located in the National Capital Region;
- to have more years of service;
- to be in the Management Category.

Longer absences for language training are also associated with rapid advancement of women, but this may be an effect (training on appointment) rather than a cause.

Time taken off for pregnancy has a negative effect on rate of advancement. In addition, for employees who have not advanced, the length of absence for pregnancy or child care prolongs their stay at the same level.

Women — especially those in senior positions — are more likely than men to seek a developmental opportunity such as a secondment or a high-profile project. For men, the desire for a developmental opportunity decreases as they reach more senior positions.

Men and women sought promotion at the same rate over the past three years (and were turned down at the same rate).

There was therefore no evidence that women are less career-minded than men in the public service.

BARRIERS

The reasons most frequently given by men and women for being turned down for promotion in the last three years were:

- My manager/supervisor did not want to have to replace me.
- I was “not part of the group.”
- My manager/supervisor wouldn’t support my application.
- My manager/supervisor did not think I was ready.
- I am an Anglophone.
- My gender (more women than men cited this reason).
- My manager/supervisor did not give me information about the job.
- I didn’t get along with my manager/supervisor.

In addition, women were statistically more likely than men to cite being turned down for promotion because they:

- were pregnant or planning to become pregnant;
- had young children or other dependents at home;
- wanted a job normally filled by a man;
- had taken child-care/maternity leave;
- could not relocate;
- worked part-time, or shared a job.

It is important to recognize that these responses apply to denial of promotion in the last three years. Clearly, a woman older than childbearing age would not have been turned down for promotion in the last three years for being pregnant, though she might have been earlier in her career.

Therefore it is important to note that:

- 25% of women with young children (under 12 years) identified this as a reason why they had been denied a promotion in the last three years.
- 23% of women with young children stated that taking maternity/child-care leave had been a barrier to their promotion in the last three years.

Women in the Scientific and Professional, Technical, and Operational categories were significantly more likely than men to say that:

- they were denied a promotion because of their gender;

- they were denied a promotion because they wanted a job normally filled by a man.

In summary, women and men believe that the attitudes and beliefs or behaviour of managers and supervisors are the main barriers to promotion. In addition, women believe that gender stereotyping of jobs, gender and greater family responsibility are further barriers to advancement.

Concerning men and women who have advanced more rapidly:

- More women than men wanted a promotion in the last three years.
- Men and women who have advanced more rapidly were promoted at the same rate.
- Women gave the same reasons for being denied a promotion as men gave, with one notable exception; women also stated that they wanted a job which would normally be filled by a man.

Concerning men and women who have advanced more slowly:

- Women and men wanted promotion at the same rate, and were denied promotion at the same rate.
- Women were more likely than their male equivalents to identify as barriers their belief that:
 - their manager/supervisor did not want to replace them. (Women in the Technical Category expressed particular problems with such attitudes.)
 - pregnancy, having responsibility for young children and taking maternity/child-care leave were all barriers to promotion.

All women who have advanced, rapidly or slowly, listed similar barriers to advancement: notably, reasons related to their managers' attitudes/behaviour/beliefs and barriers related to their gender. However, women who have advanced more slowly were more likely to have barriers related to:

- managers/supervisors not giving information;
- inability to relocate;
- being too young.

ATTITUDES

In their responses to the survey, men and women showed sharply divergent perceptions of the situation of women in the federal public service.

One perception on which they disagree is the existence of a glass ceiling — an invisible but impassable barrier that prevents women from rising. Women overwhelmingly (67%) believe there is such a barrier, and this is true of women in all occupational categories. An even higher proportion (79%) of women managers in the public service say such a barrier exists.

Most men do not agree that women encounter a glass ceiling. This percentage increases with seniority; 62% of men in senior-level jobs do not believe women face an invisible barrier.

Another widely held belief among women (57%) is that they have to be better qualified than men to be promoted. Even more women managers believe this (79%) and so do more women in senior jobs (77%). Three quarters of men disagree, and 54% strongly disagree.

Employment equity and affirmative action programs are another area of disagreement. Most men in the public service (54%) believe that these programs give women an unfair advantage. This is particularly true among men in the Management, and the Administrative and Foreign Service categories, and rises to 66% among men in senior-level jobs. Most men in senior-level jobs (59%) also believe that employment equity programs have placed women in jobs beyond their expertise and training. The strength of this view diminishes in the lower levels of the public service. Overall, 46% of all male public servants hold this belief. Most women (53%) do not agree that employment equity places women in jobs beyond their expertise and training. The more senior the woman, the more she disagrees with this statement.

About half of the respondents (both men and women) believed that “men and women are treated the same way in my department” but only about a third believed this to be true of the public service as a whole. Nearly half (48%) of women and a third (33%) of men felt that managers and supervisors in the public service are often sexist. Forty-five percent of men and 34% of women disagreed.

Nevertheless, a surprising degree of support for sexist attitudes showed up in the survey. On stereotyping, 65% of men and 52% of women agreed that “some jobs are more suited to the skills men have, while some jobs are more suited to women” — and 28% of men and 19% of women “agreed strongly.” Most people disagreed with the statement that “men make better managers than women do” but 20% of men and 11% of women supported it. Two thirds of men and 81% of women strongly disagree with the idea that “women should not expect to be placed in management positions that have usually been held by men” — but 7% of men and 8% of women supported the statement.

As to sexist jokes in the workplace, 39% of men felt “people are too sensitive” about them, while 39% disagreed. Of the women responding to this issue, 31% agreed and 51% disagreed.

Family responsibilities are a disadvantage when being considered for a job, according to 42% of women and 25% of men, but there was strong disagreement from 35% of men and 23% of women.

When asked about the statement that “women who are pregnant should not apply for competitions in the public service,” more than half (56%) of all respondents disagreed strongly, and 68% of women disagreed strongly. Nevertheless, 21% of men and 13% of women agreed.

Seventy percent of respondents and 80% of women disagreed strongly with the statement that “raising children should be a woman’s responsibility” while 14% of men and 7% of women supported it.

OTHER ISSUES

Access to Leave

By far the greatest number of leaves of three months or more reported by survey respondents were by women taking leave for “maternity/parental leave following the birth or adoption of a child.”

No difference was found in the proportions of men and women reporting having taken educational leave. Women in the middle level of the Scientific and Professional Category had more leaves than their male colleagues, but there was no difference in the length of time taken.

No difference was found in the number or duration of language training leaves for men and women. Women in the senior level of the Administrative and Foreign Service Category took more leaves but there was no difference in the length of time taken.

Who Gets Paid While on Leave

Survey returns showed that men were more likely than women to report having received fully paid leave.

Disability leave: men were more likely than women to report having taken fully paid disability leave.

Maternity/paternity/child-care leave: men were more likely than women to report having taken fully paid care leave.

Education leave: men were more likely than women to report having received fully paid or partially paid educational leave.

Language training: virtually everyone, men and women, reported fully paid leaves.

THE HYPOTHESES

Apart from providing descriptive information about the perceptions and work experience of public servants, the questionnaire was designed to test a series of specific hypotheses contrasting the experiences of women to those of men. These hypotheses, which were developed from the results of a series of focus groups and other sources, helped to refine the Task Force's understanding of barriers faced by women in the public service. The hypotheses follow, together with a summary of the findings of the analysis.

Hypothesis 1

That women advance more slowly than men in the federal public service.

(Refuted in general. True for the junior and intermediate levels of the Scientific and Professional Category, where a large concentration of women (5,572) can be found.)

Hypothesis 2

(a) That a majority of people in the public service support employment equity principles.

(Confirmed.)

(b) That some men in the public service support the principles of employment equity but do not support special programs (affirmative action) for women, particularly during restraint.

(Confirmed: Women, in general, support such programs. A majority of men do not.)

(c) That some people, both men and women, who agree with and support the principles underlying employment equity are not fully aware of the degree of discrimination that some women face in the workplace.

(Confirmed.)

Hypothesis 3

(a) That barriers identified by women will include the need to assume responsibility for the family, sex stereotyping and discrimination.

(Confirmed.)

(b) That there will be no difference between men and women in the perception of the importance of some other possible barriers, including:

- (1) first language;
- (2) relocation;
- (3) being Anglophone or Francophone;
- (4) ability to get along with one's supervisor;

(5) supervisor/manager believing the employee was ready for promotion.

(Significant differences were noted in regard to issues (2) and (5).)

Hypothesis 4

- (a) That women are more likely than men to depend upon formal mechanisms for getting ahead in the public service, and men are more likely to use — or to try to use — informal networks.

(Women depend more than men on formal mechanisms for getting into the public service, but there were no significant differences in using formal/informal mechanisms for advancement.)

- (b) That formal programs useful for advancement (Career Assignment Program, Corporate Assignment, Special Assignment Pay Plan, Temporary Assignment Pool, etc.) in the public service have assisted the advancement of men more than the advancement of women.

(Neither men nor women made significant mention of the importance of these programs.)

- (c) That men are more likely than women to be released on education and language training leave.

(Refuted. Same amount of leave taken, but men more likely to be paid, fully or partially, while on educational leave.)

Hypothesis 5

- (a) That not all women and not all men in the public service want to advance, and more women than men will say they are satisfied with their current position, but that women will be more likely to give non-work responsibilities as the reason why they are satisfied to stay at their current level.

(Refuted. Men and women expressed a similar degree of interest in promotion possibilities, except in certain specific areas.)

- (b) That women's career plans for the immediate future (three to five years) will be similar to men's.

(Confirmed.)

- (c) That the most important measures identified by women for improving their rate of advancement will include actions that reduce the pressures related to working while being responsible for young children, and actions that reduce discrimination and sex stereotyping.

(Confirmed.)

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The responses to the questionnaire survey have produced a bank of data rich in information about the experiences of public servants with respect to working conditions and barriers to developmental opportunities and promotion. The results of the survey provide valuable insights into the barriers for men and women within the federal bureaucracy. Nevertheless, it is important to consider the findings of the survey in context, as an important element to the picture, but as one element only.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 have examined some aspects of the distribution of women in the public service in terms of numbers. The examination has focused principally on distribution statistics, advancement rates, mobility patterns and other numerical parameters that define women's position in the federal labour force. This tends to portray the issue of employment equity as simply an exercise in applied statistics, which it emphatically is not. The Task Force research went far beyond the numbers. Several lines of research were specifically designed to elicit personal observations; to examine the human aspects of the issue.

The following chapter goes beyond the numbers to look at barriers to advancement in human terms.

CHAPTER 6

Barriers – Beyond the Numbers

I did have enough sense to use only my first initial on my publications. One scientist showed surprise on finding that I was the author of a certain article and remarked "Gee, if I had known that, I wouldn't have read the paper."

The barriers faced by women in today's public service are for the most part less obvious than those of the past. The regulation requiring women to resign upon marriage (which was revoked for the public service, with some notable exceptions, in 1955) was an easily identified barrier, with a readily apparent solution.

Today's barriers are generally more subtle and integrated, forming an intricate pattern of confinement and limitation, rather than opportunity.

Adding to the difficulty of addressing today's barriers is the phenomenon of "lip-service." It is no longer as acceptable as it once was to be open about airing sexist attitudes, but this does not mean that they have disappeared. They are simply harder to prove. As one woman in a non-traditional job recalled:

Our Regional Chief usually greets me with a smile and a big "Hello" — but has emphatically stated that women shouldn't be doing this kind of work and that he didn't want any more female technicians hired. To the Deputy Minister, to whom I was proudly introduced as the only female technician, he said "If we could find more like her we would hire a dozen!"

Verbal support expressed by senior management for the challenges faced by women in the workplace is infrequently backed by substance. An annual

senior management meeting to review lists of “high flyer” female employees is often the full extent of attention given to the issue in many departments. This is followed by a return to business as usual.

In seeking solutions, the highly structured nature of the federal public service makes it tempting to focus on barriers that are built into the system itself. There is comfort in imagining that the amendment of a regulation and the implementation of a new policy will, on their own, provide a “quick fix” solution. With few exceptions, such is not the case.

Rules are vulnerable to the will of those who use them. The same set of regulations, in two different sets of hands, can produce widely different effects. Regulations and policies can be used to facilitate or complicate any transaction. This effect is particularly evident in areas of flexibility such as secondments, training, job-sharing, hours of work and so on.

From our research, both numerical and anecdotal, a consensus on the most significant barriers emerged. The nature of the barriers and the extent to which they are a factor varies somewhat depending on the type of work a woman is doing. For example, the barriers faced by women in the pink ghettos differ to some extent from those faced by women in senior management and those confronting women in the non-traditional trades. It is clear, however, that the most significant barriers derive from attitudes. Let’s look at these under three main headings: attitudes, corporate culture and balancing work and family responsibilities.

ATTITUDES

A Woman’s Place

I was talking to a Grade 7 class and one boy kept saying “What a joke. Women or girls can’t be firefighters.” I said I had been doing it for twelve years, so I guess girls can become firefighters. He just shrugged his shoulders and slouched back in his seat. He wasn’t going to listen to any of this garbage.

The defining of “a woman’s place” starts early and is deeply ingrained in both men and women by the time they reach the work force. As outlined in Chapter 3, “a woman’s place” in the federal public service is quite clear.

The majority of women are in support, not supervision; administration, not management; conventional occupations, not non-traditional fields.

The questionnaire survey results highlight the extent to which both sexes continue to relegate women to "their place." Across the public service as a whole, 65% of men and 52% of women believe that some jobs are best suited to one gender or the other. In the management ranks, 56% of men and 30% of women hold this to be true. Twenty percent of men and 11% of women believe that men make better managers than do women. In the ranks of senior managers, 16% of men and 2% of women believe this.

The stereotypes at work in the federal public service derive to a large extent from women's traditional roles — mother, wife, daughter. Let's look in more detail at what these stereotypes are, and how they operate in the federal system to constrain the progress of women.

One of the most basic beliefs is that women, especially those with children, lack ambition and have no valid (that is, economic) incentive to progress. As a female clerk expressed it:

The RCMP view women as wives and mothers. (I have been told) my work is "something to do until you marry and have children." There is a belief that women do clerical work because they like it and are good at it.

There are women and men who enjoy clerical or secretarial work and have no desire for promotion in their current group or to make their way up the ranks. However, when this assumption is applied to all women in the support ranks, it becomes difficult to surmount.

Chapter 2 provides statistical information about the growing number of female heads of household. Yet there is a persistent belief that men do serious work to support their families, while women undertake trivial tasks for pin money. As one male middle manager expressed it:

(Women who have been out of the work force raising children) are not career oriented, but want as few responsibilities and pressures as possible and are content to earn a nice little supplementary income.

The questionnaire survey results indicate that across the public service as a whole, women are slightly more likely than men to want a developmental opportunity (57% versus 53%). This desire increases for women as they move into more senior positions, but decreases for men. When it comes to seeking promotion, women (53%) and men (52%) expressed a desire to be promoted at approximately the same rate.

When operating in tandem, the views that women lack ambition and the incentive to seek promotion can produce formidable obstacles for women trying to advance. Let's look at how these stereotypes surface in the workplace.

One of the most commonly cited frustrations expressed by women was their inability to acquire developmental training. As a male manager observed:

The training opportunities offered to women in the public service are limited and seem chiefly confined to making them better at their existing jobs — when what is really needed is to give them the marketable skills to break into other areas.

Even movement within the pink ghettos can be restricted by denial of developmental training.

Management does not approve courses taken by clerical workers unless they relate directly to their position. I had signed up for a word processing course at the advanced level, having already completed the beginner level using my own money. Rather than consider a transfer to even the steno pool (where perhaps I could work my way up to supervisor) I was refused reimbursement costs as it did not relate to my position. A closed door to getting ahead ... A prerogative set with tunnel vision.

The Treasury Board staff training policy states that "training related to employee personal development or career advancement which is not related to the employer's human resource requirements is the responsibility of individual employees." This policy and its narrow interpretation when applied to support staff remains one of the greatest systemic barriers for members of the pink ghettos who want to advance. Although the policy allows for leave without pay or some reimbursement for courses taken

outside working hours, these provisions provide little relief for those wanting to take Public Service Commission courses that are often available only during working hours. These are also the courses most likely to be desired or required for advancement.

This lack of flexibility is often coupled with a second obstacle — the “We can’t afford to lose you” syndrome.

Many bosses do not want to lose a good secretary and will deliberately hold her back from training, acting assignments, etc. and may even rate her lower than deserved on her performance appraisal or give her a lukewarm reference to prevent her being successful in competition.

When asked in the questionnaire survey why they believe they have been denied promotion, 25% more women than men cited “unwillingness of management to replace me.”

Nor does actually doing a specific task guarantee that a woman will be seen as the logical choice for related training. The following is a case in point.

When I was in management information processing I had been doing a lot of work back and forth in Washington. I had a lot of experience and really knew more about it than anyone. The Director of the division called me and said that they really wanted a hot shot to go down to Washington for six weeks to learn all about it. Neither one of the men he was considering knew as much about it as I did. They did not even consider me although I was doing it all.

The traditional view that defines ambition as the desire for promotion and increased salary still prevails as the standard for judging an employee’s commitment. One woman who quit the federal public service explains:

I felt that because I was no longer interested in senior management I was no longer a valuable employee. I wasn’t perceived as being ambitious. They didn’t realize that ambition can go laterally as well as vertically.

A large number of women identified the lack of bridging programs as the second frustration arising from these stereotypes. These on-the-job opportunities to leave the pink ghetto, move from middle management to senior ranks or to progress from the technical to professional ranks have all but disappeared in the last ten years. As one female middle manager put it:

I don't think I would ever have gotten here based on today's standards for bridging the gap. There aren't the administrative trainee programs anymore, there aren't many ways of bridging that gap.

Even for women who already possess the required education and experience, there is a lack of mechanisms or will within the system to facilitate a better use of their abilities. Only a handful of respondents to the questionnaire survey mentioned bridging programs as likely developmental tools. Some women have had to quit the federal public service and re-join at a higher level to "bridge the gap."

I joined External Affairs as a SCY-1 in 1981, with an honours B.A. and two years teaching experience in Nigeria. I worked as a secretary for four years at the Canadian embassy in Bangkok. On my return to Canada I consulted with my personnel officer about career advancement opportunities, producing my last appraisal, rated as outstanding, and references from my various supervisors....She informed me that there were no avenues by which secretaries could switch to the PM group. I took education leave to pursue a scholarship program to a Master's degree in Public Administration. When I was due to graduate, I was advised that there were still no opportunities. I then resigned from the federal public service until I was able to enter the foreign service from the outside six months later.

The progress to date of women in the Senior Management and Executive categories may be attributable in part to the mechanisms put in place to provide counselling and training to women in the feeder groups. A large gap still exists in other areas, especially for those wanting to leave the pink ghettos.

What about the rest of us — the vast majority of female staff in the lower clerical and secretarial levels? What about encouraging advancement from within? What about programs to provide women with the opportunity to advance to the low and middle management levels? Why does everything appear to be for the senior levels?

We are aware that some departments have set up internal bridging programs or programs that include a number of departments with likely prospects for rotational assignments. Although some of these may work well at officer levels, they are often less productive for support staff. A male manager describes the problem:

Even when alleged developmental opportunities are offered, they tend to be laterals in disguise. Our secretary, who wants to get into the audit field, was offered a developmental secondment at the AS-1 level by the Treasury Board. First, the pay was changed to continue at her SCY-3 rate and then, as the secondment developed, she discovered more and more that all the receiving department wanted was a free secretary. My conclusion from this and other observations is that most secondments relating to women are, at best, laterals in disguise, and do absolutely nothing to create developmental opportunities.

Nowhere is gender stereotyping more apparent than in the challenges facing women moving into the non-traditional trades. The first hurdle lies in being taken seriously as a candidate for such a position. As a female carpenter recalled:

After I had waited a year to get into a pre-apprenticeship course my apprenticeship counsellor, with whom I had been dealing all along, neglected to tell me that the course start date had changed. When I went in he said "Oh, gee — I'm sorry, but that course started two weeks ago." I think it was because he wouldn't take me seriously.

Nor are solid educational credentials and hands-on experience always enough to overcome patronizing attitudes, paternalism and resentment. As one woman wrote:

I obtained my diploma in Naval Architecture...graduating at the top of my class. I was interviewed by a panel of four people and found the vein of questioning and the delivery highly insulting. "Do electronics scare you? Do power tools or hand tools scare you? Are you afraid to get dirty?" I had spent the previous summer in an electronics shop at the Institute for Marine Dynamics and had run my own test project. Both facts were clearly outlined on my résumé.

Even in an office environment, the stereotypes persist for women in technical areas, as this woman in a large operational department describes:

My job is Informatics Officer. I offer informatics support for informatics software and computer hardware, as well as administer the office automation system. I am often trying to help one of the men on the floor, but am pushed out of the way or asked ridiculous questions such as "Check the dip switch. Do you know what a dip switch is?" This is my job. I am fully qualified to perform this job and I resent having some man assume that because I am female I don't understand the mechanics of the equipment involved.

The pioneer women who are entering the non-traditional trades meet not only frustration but also resentment that they are able to succeed in these fields. As a female pilot recalled:

One guy in the Yukon got me mad. He wanted to know what the hell I thought I was trying to prove, that this isn't fun up here, this isn't summer camp, this is dangerous stuff. If a woman could do it, it became less dramatic.

Strong feelings that women need or want to be coddled or protected are still prevalent in the workplace. A female forester describes this stereotype in action:

When we were dropped off to do some work the pilot would hang around and not want to leave because he just didn't feel right about leaving two women with just a tent on a bald hillside at 35 degrees below.

Preventing a woman from demonstrating that she is capable of performing the full range of duties of a position ultimately leads to an assumption that she is incapable of doing the job.

When I hear stories about how women are being pampered, I always say that women are often not given the same tasks as men on the job because the men don't think women can do them. The women are perfectly willing and able but aren't given the chance. So they are being forcibly pampered.

Woman as wife, woman as daughter, woman as mother. These traditional domestic roles, carried into the workplace, hamper women's attempts to be treated in a professional manner.

There is a scientist who is a bit of a mentor. He's older and I consider him to be a good friend, but I will do something and he will say "good girl." ... I'm the same age as his daughter and that's the way he treats me.

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I think to some extent my boss sees me as the one Division Chief who will do what he wants me to do. I will be good, the good girl.

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I think I am often treated like somebody's daughter, not just by my boss, but by the public service in general.

The stereotypes surrounding women with children seem to be particularly difficult to overcome, and are most often reflected in the selection process.

(The manager told me) that a female candidate told a selection board that her child's health came before her work, so her application was dismissed.

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Once I was a member of a selection board, and the other members (all male) were asking dumb questions such as "What are your intentions about family?" and so on. One candidate was a man so I asked him "What about your family? How many children have you got? What are your intentions about enlarging it? Is it going

to interfere with your work?" ... He was so discomforted and so were the others on the board... But how else do you make the point?

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After seeking my superior's opinion re my lack of success in competitions, he suggested that I should perhaps "spend more time at home with my child." It seemed that my fate was sealed right then and there.

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It was really important for me to get this one position so I studied and studied.... A lot of people came up to me afterwards and told me that I had done very well. It was all males and all economists who ended up getting the positions. I went to the Chief of Training and asked her how I could have done better. She told me that I was magnificent and that I couldn't have done better. But she said that I was married and had a small child and therefore I wouldn't be able to travel. My mother lived with me at that time and she could have looked after my child while I was out. But she didn't even ask me.

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I took extra training at night which was difficult as I had two small children at home and was pregnant with my third. With this course in gerontology and my certified nursing assistant experience, I was more than qualified to be a WP-2 counsellor. I competed and always came second. The men who came first had no more, and usually less training ... My name was put on an eligible list, but acting appointments were given to two men instead of myself. I was told by my supervisor that it would be hard for me to travel, having young children, with winter conditions.

This slighting of women's capabilities and contributions ultimately leads to a second set of attitudes that can be frustrating and almost insurmountable.

I found that as a woman, one had to be even more careful because people, particularly men, sat in judgement to make them feel they hadn't any proven records.

Because women's efforts are undervalued, there is scepticism regarding their credentials and experience, and a double standard imposed with respect to how they are judged.

I still meet men who are astonished by the level of my capabilities on the job. Some have made it clear that their astonishment is because I am a woman.

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Women have to prove their excellence over and over as they move from one job to another while men take their credentials with them.

When asked in our questionnaire survey if women must be better qualified than men, 57% of women across the public service said "yes" while only 18% of men agreed. In the management ranks, the percentage of men agreeing with the proposition held steady at 18%, but climbed to 79% among management women. In the Administrative Support Category, 53% of women and 16% of men felt that a woman needed to be better qualified than a man.

The process of "earning her credentials" is not an easy one for women. Where it is assumed that a man has or will develop certain abilities, a woman must have a concrete record of achievement or experience. This becomes an important factor at several points in the screening and selection process, and in more informal opportunities such as acting or "stretch" assignments.

Lack of supervisory experience really hurts a woman in the executive ranks. Somehow we can see a man with an English degree who has never supervised as an executive, but we can't see a woman the same way. It seems that it is critical for a woman to have had the actual experience, while we will say of a man, "Well, you know, he hasn't supervised anybody, but we know he can."

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I've also found that women think that to win a job competition and be promoted to a new job they must know all about it. Men are different. Men get a new job and then go on to learn what it is all about.

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The one woman instructor who had been there had been deemed unsuccessful. I said "What did you base your judgement on?" And they answered "Well, she couldn't teach." I said "Had she ever been allowed to teach?" And they said "No, we knew she couldn't teach."

This scepticism is not confined to the office, but carries over to the non-traditional work site.

As a construction carpenter you go on new jobs all the time ... So every time everybody is going to ask "What is she doing here? Am I going to have to carry her boards? Am I going to have to do her work?" Or "What is she after anyways? Sex?" Every single time you have to prove yourself.

What is needed to overcome this scepticism? More work, more hours, more responsibility.

You must make sure that a woman is visible and that she has a heavy workload, because a normal workload will not impress anyone.

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Even my best male managers, who I know really want to give women a chance, still have great difficulty. The women they pick for jobs have a proven track record — a very, very high ratio of delivery all the time. These are the women who are finally able to make it to the senior levels.

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You cannot afford to leave an 'i' undotted or a 't' uncrossed because every little chink, every little careless word, written or spoken, is a good reason to say that you are less than competent.

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Women tend to feel that they have to do a little bit more and make sure that it is perfect. It's because we are expecting to be judged all the time.

The double standard outlined earlier is exhibited in the workplace in a number of ways. For example, women are often excluded from competitions due to unjustified educational requirements. One man described a situation in his office:

The District Director is a graduate of vocational school. A Clerk in the regional office has successfully graduated from the same school with excellent marks. She has, in addition, nearly one full year of the two-year technical institute course, several years of experience with the department and some evening technical courses. The department refuses to allow her to apply for an EL-1 training position. The department first told the Clerk she could not be accepted because the union would object to this 'lowering' of the standards. The IBEW stated that they had no objection. The department then claimed that the PSC would not accept the Clerk for a referral. When the PSC accepted her qualifications and referred her for an interview, the department flatly refused to accept her; she was screened out and not allowed to compete.

She was originally a CR-4, then had to quit to attend school full-time. She is now a CR-3, better educated but worse off than when she started pursuing her goal to better herself.

The District Director has fewer academic qualifications than the Clerk. Do you really need higher academic qualifications to be an EL-1 than to be an EL-7? Or do you only need them if you are female?

The double standard is also reflected in the use of the appraisal system. It can be hard to find the fine line of acceptance.

A woman who works in personnel came to me very upset. She had been sitting in on employee appraisals and she noticed that every time they came to a woman they said that she was either too docile or too aggressive. She said that she had seen some of these women work and they are tremendously smart, there's nothing wrong with them. But this is how they were rating these women all throughout the appraisals.

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(For a woman) assertiveness translates into "interpersonal problems" on appraisals. A man becomes a high flyer with a meteoric career.

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I think women are discouraged from selling themselves. You know we hear about the aggressive woman, the bitchy woman, the forward woman, the castrating woman, etc. So women are socialized not to be that way. You tend to take a lot of this unwarranted criticism to heart. There is an enormous double standard when it comes to how men and women are judged.

This brings us to another attitudinal issue that was often raised in our research, modesty. This attribute that many women possess can work against them professionally.

Women, for instance, through their up-bringing and culture, tend on the whole to be more modest than many of their male colleagues about their accomplishments. They tend to be overly modest in reporting their accomplishments, or at least, less prone to exaggerate.

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Women being interviewed want to emphasize what they have done before because they are not at all comfortable in selling themselves.

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How you get from one assignment to another has a lot to do with how you sell yourself and how you make yourself known. I think women find it difficult to pull the strings.

The stereotypes and attitudes that have been addressed and many others that also have arisen, work together to form a pattern that either excludes, undervalues or belittles the contributions of women. The extent to which these stereotypes are unacknowledged, allowed to flourish without censure, and in fact, with tacit or open approval, leads us to consider another barrier to women — that of the corporate culture of the federal public service.

CORPORATE CULTURE

"That's how we do things around here."

Historically, rules and regulations were designed, composed and written by men. Never did they think that there might be a different viewpoint, another side of things. Women bring something very different, culturally very different, as they should.

"Corporate culture" refers not only to the rules and regulations of an organization, but also to the informal structures and codes of acceptable behaviour that operate in that environment. The federal public service has a distinct culture, as do individual departments.

The corporate culture of the federal public service can best be described as an "old boys' club."

The first thing the Government did was to take their documentation and change it to his/her, he/she, but meanwhile it is still a male world. There's always that little thing in there that is hidden that you, a woman, can identify. If you were to stop them and tap them on the shoulder they'd say "You're crazy. You're exaggerating. You're one of those feminists who is always trying to push women ahead." It's always there.

The solution, however, is not as easy as a quick change of pronouns. Culture is more subtle and pervasive.

On a recent PSC course, a video presentation never showed a woman teaching the skills, only learning from a man. She was twice the victim of a car breakdown in which she called her male friend to correct a coil problem and to bring gas to her. She was shown as unable to handle the situations herself, while he was always shown in a positive and confident manner showing her where she had "gone wrong."

The "old boys' club" excludes women both physically —

I am on a board of directors that always has a fishing trip the weekend before the annual meeting. I cannot see myself on this fishing trip with 14 men. But somewhere over the course of this fishing

trip they are going to be talking about the annual meeting and the strategies to approach various things.

and psychologically —

How does a woman operate in this system? A great deal of thought has to be given as to how a woman is prepared for this because I don't think that women think in the same way as men. If she does think the same way she tends to become a little too masculine in her approach. Women must be in positions of responsibility in the federal public service not only because of their knowledge, but because of the ways they deal with people and their problems. And you don't want to kill that by turning them into little artificial men.

Many of the pioneer women in the senior ranks of the federal public service felt they had to become as masculine in their management styles and indeed in their physical appearance as possible in order to survive. This narrow band of acceptable behaviour for women has loosened only minimally over time. The "normal" model is that of a male, with women still judged against that norm.

You have to make sure that you behave in an acceptable manner by a man's standards. We are still in a male-dominated era.

The relegation of women to an outer circle of secondary consideration makes them less visible in the workplace as serious professionals. This "invisible woman" effect surfaces most strongly when decisions are being made about "stretch assignments." These opportunities, usually secondments or acting appointments, are often the most valuable paths to increased exposure, challenging work and eventual promotion. Many respondents felt that women are all but excluded from these opportunities.

The kind of discrimination which concerns me is ... the invisibility of women in the informal selection process which identifies officers with potential and grooms them for the future.

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A good number of my male colleagues have been given active boosts to their careers by being staffed into high-profile jobs, often as underfills, and working for high-profile supervisors. Not surprisingly, they have done considerably better in terms of appraisals and promotion, not just because they are able officers, but because they have been given the training and monitoring to make them even more effective.

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In one case, a young man was given all the interesting assignments and developmental opportunities despite the fact that there was a woman who had been there for years, knew the place inside out and was very capable. I have no doubt believing that this is a very widespread phenomenon.

Many women who wrote to us acknowledged that they manage in a different style than men.

I think women are far more flexible and democratic than men. We tend to measure output rather than whether you checked in at eight and left at five. If I want a report by a certain time, I want the report. It doesn't matter if an employee leaves early and works at home as long as I get the report. But I'm not sure men are ready for that. I think that men are afraid that we might break down the structure of things.

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My view of the world and that of my male colleagues is different, as it should be. That's why we all complement each other. It's so rich to have diverse views regardless of language, race, origin, gender, whatever. I don't believe that this has been nurtured in the public service. The dominant model has been a military one which has been very successful! It's male. Very hierarchical. And paternalistic in the sense "If you do what you are told we will look after you." Women work much better in a collegial atmosphere, teamwork. I think men have difficulty working in that model.

Women's frustrations arose because this different style, even if successful, was often met with disdain or even hostility.

If your boss has an idea about you, you don't know what he is thinking because he is not conscious of the fact that he has judged you. You know sexual harassment when it happens ... But this other thing, how do you deal with it?

.....

Our intelligence is insulted by management and our negative experiences laughed at or ridiculed by the men who work in the branch.

Hostility directed towards women in the workplace often emerged when women stepped out of their stereotyped roles. The resentment aroused by promotion to a supervisory position or entry into a non-traditional job was often cited as the catalyst for hostile behaviour.

One woman in a non-traditional position remarked:

When I was in the process of divorcing my husband and very unsure of my future, my boss used to remark that if he were my husband he would "beat me black and blue."

Another woman, employed as a systems "trouble shooter" at a large technical department, wrote:

I have received comments such as "Why should we listen to you? You aren't an engineer. You're just a stupid woman."

The hostile behaviour sometimes takes the form of sexual harassment.

When I first started working as a clerk, I was the only female in that office. I believed that the looks, comments, treatment, were what every woman had to put up with. I would blush, avoid and ignore certain co-workers. I was told that the woman who was in the position before me had quit in the middle of the day, crying. The comments were that she had no sense of humour.

Many of the women we heard from on the subject of sexual harassment were outraged not just by the behaviour itself, but by the workplace culture that allowed the harasser to emerge unscathed, while the victim was accused of having "inter-personal problems" or of not being "a good sport".

My superior would ask me out at least once a week. As my tolerance level became thin, I made my position clearer.... His affection soon turned to personal harassment, although he stated that I knew exactly how things could get better. After several years I was no longer alone, so several of us put in a complaint to the Public Service Commission. It is two years later and our complaint is still not settled. The harasser is doing quite well — supervising and acting in the manager's position. I moved to another town. Others involved have resigned, transferred or remained there in frustration. All of us are considered as problems, not the harasser.

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The real problem is not that one man exists who upsets so many women, but that all of us who went quietly to management and to personnel were hushed, or told something would be done, or told we were trying to cause trouble in a nice office environment.

.....

I was harassed by one gentleman so much that I had to go see his manager (who is also mine) and tell him that unless he did something about the situation I would have to file a grievance. They talked to him, made him apologize to me, but I am the one who received a poor evaluation and was told that I don't interact well with others and have a bad attitude. The gentleman in question received a glowing evaluation.

In response to the questionnaire survey, 40% of men indicated that they believe "people are too sensitive about sexist jokes in the workplace." For men in senior management, the figure was 31%.

Many of the women we interviewed who had quit the federal public service agreed that the pervasive male corporate culture was a major cause for their exit.

While the work is fascinating, you come up against a network of relationships that are very hard to penetrate. Women feel that they are not accepted. They feel that men are trying to keep it as much as possible a male environment.

.....

The department I worked for was very male-dominated. It's not that you are discriminated against, it's just that you feel alien so much of the time.

For women in the federal public service, these first two barriers — attitudes and corporate culture — create an environment of estrangement and disaffection. The nebulous nature of these barriers makes them difficult to substantiate and challenging to remedy. The third barrier, in contrast, is a concrete, everyday reality for many women — balancing work and family responsibilities.

BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

“Doing it All”

Should a woman not have any children, or forget the ones she has?

Aside from the stereotyped attitudes surrounding women with children, the practical aspects of meeting both the demands of a career and those of family obligations can be overwhelming. Most often these responsibilities are related to child care, but elder care is an increasing responsibility for the ageing work force, as are other family obligations.

The demographics of the ageing population and the influx of women into the work force have been outlined in Chapter 2. The federal public service has done much to meet these demands in recent years, but much remains to be done.

Efforts to accommodate the demands faced by working mothers have been seen as “concessions” — extra privileges given to women. Given that society requires and presumably also desires that the population continue to renew itself, women, as the only gender capable of childbearing, will continue to require the time and support necessary to do so. The nature and extent of this support varies greatly in the workplace and will continue to fuel debate for some time. Whatever its bounds, such support is still not regarded as a reflection of society's needs, but as “special favours” for women in the work force.

Child-care provisions and maternity leave create some resentment in the corporate culture of the federal public service.

Since I came back from maternity leave there have been some negative feelings, snide comments about how nice it is to have me back at work after all that time off.

One brief reported:

Valid certified leave, taken to nurse a sick child, was remarked on detrimentally in my appraisal.

One woman sensed a different reaction if the caregiver was the father. She feels that:

If she takes time off work to put a child in school, the attitude is that she is letting family interfere with her career. The implication is that she is not really serious. If a man takes the same time off, he is making great efforts to be a good father and is lauded for his actions.

Recent progress notwithstanding, most of the women addressing their concerns on this issue to the Task Force felt that child care, elder care and domestic chores are still overwhelmingly the responsibility of women.

Women are still the prime caregivers. I still don't think that there are enough support systems for women to allow them to get ahead. I still think women do most of the homemaking. I don't think men have reached the point where they are doing equal work in the home. Some men are, but most men aren't. Women are tired, having to juggle a job and the family. That's still an impediment to getting ahead in their careers.

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I think women tend to carry greater family responsibility than men and have been more supportive of their husbands than the husbands have been of their wives. If the husband gets a promotion, the wife is more apt to adapt her career, whereas there aren't many men who would do the same thing for their wives.

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I know damn well that I probably work much harder than most of my male counterparts. I don't come in until 9 o'clock but I also didn't get here at 7:30 and have my coffee and paper delivered to me; and I don't go home and have my paper ready for me while

someone cooks up my meal. I'm not looking for special treatment, but don't make life so difficult when I have to go home to my family.

As we noted in Chapter 5, the results of the questionnaire survey indicate that women are statistically more likely than men to say that within the last three years they were turned down for promotion because they had young children or other dependents at home or because they wanted part-time work or job-sharing to allow them to accommodate family responsibilities. Twenty-five percent of women with children at home under the age of 12 identified this as a reason why they had been denied a promotion in the last three years. Twenty-three percent of women with young children at home stated that taking maternity/child-care leave had been a barrier to their promotion during the same period.

The barriers that women are experiencing, as they seek to juggle their work and their families, range from the most obvious, day-care, to the lack of flexibility in the system. These are coupled with a number of gaps in the system with respect to leave and compensation.

Three options for women who want to spend more time with their young families are part-time work, job sharing and care and nurturing leave. All three, however, have significant economic limitations. These are dealt with in Chapter 7.

In addition to the compensation issues, job sharing, part-time work, spousal relocation, care and nurturing leave and compressed hours have another significant downside. All are subject to management approval.

My manager decided that because we were in a period of restraint, all women who were on part-time would have to go back to full-time or forget it. People who were on a compressed work week had to go back on a regular work week.

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I requested part-time work and it was denied by the ADM. The DM directed that part-time work be available on a trial basis for four months. During that time I was sent on six business trips in the course of three months, compared to two half-day trips a year

in the three years previous. Only one week after the commencement of the part-time work week, my manager told me that under no circumstances would the arrangement be continued after the four month period. Last week was the end of the trial — all goals were met (despite having been expanded during the trial period) but the arrangement was terminated nevertheless.

Allowable child-care expenses are another issue that hampers women in the workplace.

The amounts allowed for child care while mothers travel on business are inadequate and would not meet, for example, minimum pay requirements set out by Ontario legislation for domestic employees.

This issue is also discussed in detail in the following chapter.

Training presents a problem for many women with young families.

One time we offered training courses to women in conjunction with Algonquin College. Men could go on these courses as well, but they were really for women. The men taking these courses could go home and do their homework. The women still had to look after the kids, cook dinner, etc, so they just did not have the time to do their homework. We had to give the women time at work to do their supplementary work for the course. That was the only way these women could stay in the course.

Residential courses, especially those of several months duration, are virtually impossible for women with children to contemplate attending. For married men with families, they may pose an inconvenience, but not an insurmountable obstacle. The nine-month residential course in Cornwall, Ontario for air traffic control trainees is a case in point. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

Increased flexibility in accommodating family responsibilities is key to integrating the changing work force and ensuring the maximum return on the investment of time and money. The following two quotes highlight the new reality of women in the workplace.

Right now we've got mechanical solutions coming out of our ears. We've got action programs, we've got this, we've got that. But nothing is being done about the real problems in the so-called "softer" areas. Can we underestimate the importance of childbearing and childrearing to women? Women endure increasing stress from conflicts between their jobs and their family responsibilities, and society still requires women to accept those responsibilities.

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If you admit you are having problems coping with a family and a career then you are considered unprofessional. I still think we have a very long way to go before the caring dimension of life is legitimate in business, career and any other dimension of life.

Earlier in this chapter we remarked that the impact of these barriers differs to some extent depending on the department in which a woman was working and the nature of the work she was doing. To illustrate this point, let's now look at how the barriers operate in four specific situations.

CHAPTER 7

Special Situations

During our interview process, in the spontaneous briefs and consultations, and in the comments volunteered at the end of the questionnaire, we encountered four situations that required special consideration. In all four cases, we undertook further investigations to be sure we understood what we had been told, and to examine the effect of these situations on the advancement of women in the public service.

In this chapter we will report what we learned. First, we will look at compensation issues and the “secondary” work force — women in part-time and short-term positions who work without pensions and job security. Second, we will examine the long-standing link between the uniformed services and the public service — a link that creates a “khaki parachute” for military personnel to enter the public service. Third, we will look at the specific barriers faced by women in the foreign service, where the combination of a corporate culture that is predominately male and a career that requires foreign postings at regular intervals, provides a particular challenge. Finally, we will look at the very top levels of the public service — the deputy minister and other senior level positions that are filled by order-in-council.

THE DARK SIDE OF FLEXIBILITY

The Secondary Work Force — Term and Part-time Employment

Many of the women we interviewed raised an issue with us that did not directly affect their own situation, but troubled them. “Be sure to look at terms” they said, “and look at pension issues.”

A term employee is one who is engaged for a specified period of time. At the end of that time, unless the term is renewed for a further period, the employment ends. Invariably, term employees are the first to be cut in any downsizing because they can be released on short notice at any time during their term without any of the procedures involved in firing. Term employees who are engaged for less than six months are not eligible to contribute to the public service pension plan or to receive a variety of other benefits. In short, they are a secondary labour force without pensions or job security.

Most (60%) term employees are women, and 20% of all women in the public service (10% of men) are term employees. Of the 20,000 women in term employment, 57% are in term positions of less than six months. Most (75%) of the women in term employment are in the Administrative Support Category, where 82% of the term employees are women. Half the women in the Scientific and Professional Category are on terms of less than six months.

Term employment has been growing as a proportion of all employment in the public service: it rose from 11% in 1983 to 13% in 1987 and 14.3% in 1988.

Recent Public Service Commission reports on staffing in three departments contain observations on the high level of term recruitment and renewal in the Administrative Support Category and refute the assumption that the nature of clerical work itself is increasingly of short duration. The increase in the use of term positions appeared to result not from the nature of the work, which was found to be ongoing, but from the recruitment strategies used by the departments concerned.

A further working paper looked at the assumption that a transition from term to indeterminate employment would likely lead to the increased representation of women in indeterminate employment in the public service. This was not supported by the findings of the report.

The number of term positions and the percentage of women in them have both increased significantly between 1983 and 1988. The disparity between men and women in term employment has been particularly severe and increasing in the Scientific and Professional, Technical and Operational

categories. This may indicate that despite their increasing numbers in the workplace, women are in fact part of a secondary work force. As the Public Service Commission says in *Women in the Federal Public Service, Working Paper #2*, "It should be a cause for concern that at least some of the apparent progress in employment equity in recent years may have been achieved at the expense of employment security."

Women Without Pensions

Part-time work and job sharing are often cited as good ways to allow women more flexibility during their childbearing and childrearing years. On the surface, this would appear to be true. However, in addition to the fact that they require management's approval, as outlined in the previous chapter, these options also carry severe economic penalties.

Employees working less than 30 hours a week are excluded from contributing to the Public Service Superannuation Plan. Nor, on return to full-time employment, may former part-time employees "buy back" superannuation for the part-time period. This has been noted as a major problem in many reports over the last 20 years, including the Archibald Report and the Royal Commission Report on the Status of Women in 1970, but it has yet to be remedied.

One woman described the effect of this regulation:

Although I worked for three years as an indeterminate employee at three days per week, none of this is counted as pensionable time... This has pushed the year at which I can retire from 2011 to 2013. While working part-time you are also not allowed to withdraw pension contributions made to date for re-investment in a private pension plan — your superannuation is basically frozen until you return to work full-time.

Since the great majority of women working part-time or on a job-sharing basis work less than 30 hours a week, they are effectively shut out of any pensionable service for that period of time, as well as some other benefits.

In 1989, part-time staff accounted for 3.8% of public servants, 83% of whom were female. In 1981, 1.8% of the public service worked part-time, 78% of which were women.

Most part-time staff are in the Administrative Support Category. Of part-time staff in this category, 88% are women whose representation there has increased by four percentage points since 1981.

Most provincial governments have long allowed superannuation contributions by part-time employees on a pro-rated basis. Given the increasing numbers of part-time employees in the federal public service and the recommendations dating back more than 20 years calling for the pensionability of part-time service in the federal government, the current situation is particularly disquieting.

Care and Nurturing Leave — The Payback

Care and nurturing leave seems, at first glance, to be an attractive option for women who wish to take up to five years of leave without pay while their children are young. However, the stringent pay-back requirement with respect to superannuation contributions makes this option economically prohibitive for many women.

Normal superannuation contributions by employees are 7.5% of gross salary (less Canada Pension Plan (CPP) contributions). On return from care and nurturing leave, unless an exception is made, a woman must pay the current contribution, plus the employee and employer's share for a period equal to the period of time she was on leave. For example, if an employee takes three years of care and nurturing leave, she must pay 22.5% (less CPP) of her gross salary in superannuation contributions for the first three years after her return to work. For some employees, this is an inconvenience, but is not insurmountable. For others, especially single parents or those in low-paying positions, its effect is more severe. Often, the only option is to seek employment in the private sector.

The problem I had was that after a three-year leave of absence I would have had to reimburse my pension benefits, which would have been about \$900.00 a month. If it hadn't been for that, I probably would have taken a three-year leave, it would have been foolish not to. I looked at all of the options available to me, and decided that I had to quit.

The issue as expressed in our research is not the necessity to reimburse the pension fund, which is only fair, but the need for more flexibility with respect to the payback period.

Child-care allowances

Allowable child-care expenses are another issue that hampers women in the workplace.

There is a Treasury Board directive that allows you to be reimbursed for the cost of babysitters if you are a single mother or your husband is physically unable to care for the children. My husband was physically able, but he had to travel a lot on business. It became very costly to travel. I would have to spend \$150.00 for three evenings away from home.

Residential training courses can cause a particular problem for single parents. For example, Transport Canada has set 50% recruitment targets for women at the entry level of the Air Traffic Control and Radio Operator groups. These courses are held in residence at the Transport Canada Training Institute in Cornwall, Ontario.

The Air Traffic Control (AI) and Radio Operator's (RO) training include seven hours of classes and a recommended two to three hours of evening study. During some phases of training, student's schedules may be from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. or 4 p.m. to midnight. As students are not considered employees until they complete their training, AI trainees receive a weekly training allowance of \$120.00, increasing to \$210.00 by the end of the nine-month training period. Room and board are provided, and considered as a taxable benefit. RO trainees receive a weekly training allowance of \$186.00 with \$86.00 deducted for room and board. Clearly, these amounts are not adequate to cover child-care expenses, effectively screening out many single parents, even those who are prepared for a long-term separation from their children. Nor is the allowance sufficient to pay for inexpensive off-campus accommodation which is, in any case, difficult to find. Transport Canada is currently exploring the possibility of providing subsidies or allowances to trainees who are single parents.

It is not unreasonable to assume that a residential course of such long duration, on minimal allowances, could be a financial impossibility for some married candidates, male and female, as well.

Together, these compensation issues severely limit the options available to women looking for increased flexibility in balancing work and family responsibilities. Indeed, the Task Force also heard from men who wanted to work part-time in order to pursue personal or family interests, but who were not prepared to absorb the economic penalties. On the surface, these options seem viable and forward-looking. On closer examination, however, they have severe financial penalties.

THE KHAKI PARACHUTE

In the course of its work, the Task Force heard from both men and women about what they felt was a major barrier to their careers — the entry of career armed forces, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) personnel into “second careers” in the federal public service. The impact of this was most strongly felt in specific groups and levels and in particular departments, although the broader effect on the corporate culture of the public service as a whole was also a concern. For women, the age and levels of entry of many former military, RCMP and CSIS personnel resulted in a blockage that was particularly formidable. Both men and women in federal offices in small or remote communities found their promotions blocked by the special entry process for the armed forces, the RCMP and CSIS. The Task Force undertook a special study of this issue and outlines its findings in this section.

In 1961, when the first major revision of the then *Civil Service Act* was enacted, one of its new principles allowed members of the armed forces and the RCMP (CSIS was added in 1984) to compete in public service closed competitions on an equal basis with public servants. This was given effect by the addition of Section 2(2) of the *Public Service Employment Act* (PSEA), which reads as follows:

(2) For the purpose of being eligible to enter competitions and for the purposes of section 11 (appointment) and 13 (area of competition), the following persons shall be deemed to be persons employed in the Public Service, namely:

- (a) members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police;*
- (b) members of the Canadian Forces;*
- (b.1) members of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service;*

This provision has nothing to do with "Veterans' Preference," which allows veterans who served overseas in the two World Wars to claim priority in staffing competitions. Veterans' Preference still exists in legislation, but the passage of time has diminished its impact. The provision described here created a special entry program for all members of the uniformed services, not war veterans.

Since January 1, 1981, the Department of National Defence (DND) has released 58,115 members of the military. Of these, 9,298, or 16%, joined the public service immediately upon leaving the military. A further 9% (5,230) joined after a break. While there is no means of identifying the department or level to which military personnel are initially appointed on joining the federal public service, data are available on the current department, group and level of those who entered the public service without a break. Patterns over the nine-year period indicate that there are specific departments and specific groups to which military personnel are attracted, and that most of their movement within the public service after initial appointment remains in these departments.

Sixty percent of military personnel who went directly from the military to the federal public service since 1981 are now employed on the civilian side of the Department of National Defence. A further 11% are at Transport Canada. Three percent now work in each of the following areas: Canada Post, Supply and Services Canada (SSC), the Communications Security Establishment and Correctional Service Canada. Two percent work in Public Works. These distributions have remained relatively constant, and account for 85% of the military personnel absorbed directly into the public service on separation from the armed forces over the nine-year time period studied.

The impact of this practice can best be assessed by looking at the specific groups and departments most affected. Since 1981, the Purchasing Group (PG) has received 212 ex-military, or 7% of the total number who entered the federal public service directly upon leaving the armed forces. Given the

nature of this group's work, most of them are in Supply and Services Canada or the civilian side of National Defence. This concentration in one group at two departments constitutes a formidable barrier for other employees in these departments trying to progress in the Purchasing Group. This is borne out by the fact that 55% of the ex-military personnel are at the three senior levels, some entering directly at the PG-4 and PG-5 levels and others being promoted through the ranks. In 1988, for example, the 19 individuals redeployed to the Purchasing Group from the armed forces represented 27% of public service recruitment to that group. When this effect is continued over a period of years and sustained by subsequent promotion to the Senior Management and Executive groups (in many cases being replaced by other ex-military members) it is not difficult to see how some areas of particular departments become almost closed to civilian public servants. Nor do these numbers include those individuals who join the public service from the RCMP and CSIS or those employed on a term, secondment or contract basis.

Section 2 (2) of the *Public Service Employment Act* is, in effect, an extremely successful affirmative action program, entrenched in legislation, and used to provide a "second career" for a group that is, by its nature, almost exclusively male. Let's compare the effect of this unofficial affirmative action program with the effectiveness of official programs to assist women's entry into specific groups.

In 1986, the Options Program was introduced to assist those women who want to move into non-traditional groups in the federal public service. A pool of person-years was made available to departments to assist in placing these women in specific non-traditional groups. Since 1986, a total of 165 women have been placed in a non-traditional job through the Options Program. During the same time frame, 1,117 ex-military members have used Section 2 (2) to be appointed to a position in these same non-traditional groups.

On a broader scale, the Treasury Board publication *On Target* establishes that there was a net increase of 619 women in the Management, Administrative and Foreign Service, Scientific and Professional, Technical and Operational categories combined, over the three-year target period 1985

to 1988. During the same period, under the auspices of Section 2 (2), 1,421 ex-military members were placed in these same groups directly upon leaving the armed forces. This number does not include the ex-military members who enter after a break in service, members of the RCMP and CSIS, term employees and those on contract or secondment.

Section 2 (2) of the PSEA has been contentious in a number of reports. The 1979 D'Avignon *Report on the Review of Personnel Management and the Merit Principle* had this to say on the subject in its *Working Paper on Personnel Management and the Merit Principle*:

Employees resent the circumstances which they believe give uniformed employees advantages in competitions — the civilian supervisor retired from the military or police who hires his or her former colleagues into his or her organization; the position held open until a uniformed person is ready to leave the force; the training received by members of the armed forces and Royal Canadian Mounted Police which is often superior to that received by their civilian counterparts.... Some managers have argued that it would be wasteful to ignore these highly qualified people or, indeed, not to encourage them into the federal public service.

We have heard, on the other hand, strong resentment expressed by employees who consider their prospects for advancement to be reduced by competition for civilian positions ... We have heard allegations that some positions are earmarked for uniformed staff who retire, and that civilian contenders, no matter how competent, are not given serious consideration.

The D'Avignon Report eventually recommended that the *Public Service Employment Act* "be silent on the question of special access by members of the uniformed services to civilian positions." In other words, remove the section and end the access. This recommendation has not been implemented.

Our research confirmed that the concerns highlighted by the D'Avignon Report continue. The comments on this subject centre on the resulting militaristic management style.

There is a mind-set of ex-military officers (arising from the fact that) very few wives of military personnel are able to establish careers of their own. In addition, almost all of the colleagues and

superiors of military men are other men. These two create a pattern that prevents them from seeing women as equals in the business world.

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It seems to me that until the structural underpinning of the federal civil service, involving such authoritarian, often centralized decision-making is changed, there is little room, nor advantage, for women to progress in the federal civil service.

Nor was this feeling restricted to women. One man who had quit the public service described his primary reason for doing so:

Middle level management is just chock-full of ex-military — its like a solid-wall mentality that anyone who is not military can't get through. If I had trouble with these guys, I imagine that a lot of women have difficulty breaking past this private gentlemen's club. I know how to get along with military guys. I've worked with them and they are people too, nice people. But do they deserve that extra advantage of the second career of being parachuted into jobs they really don't know?

In addition to problems of management style, the systemic manifestations of this affirmative action program for the military add to the frustrations of men and women trying to progress.

The military create a closed shop for advancement from the writing of the job description right through the hiring process.

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Any time a position has any responsibility or is anything more than "run of the mill" it is held by a regular member (of the RCMP). This applies to positions that do not require policing experience. This takes away opportunities for advancement and the member transferred into the position is trained by a female public servant being paid half his salary.

In some key departments, this old boys' network combines with the informal staffing system to form a virtually impregnable personnel shop in its own right.

In federal offices outside Ottawa, especially in areas with large RCMP detachments or Canadian forces' bases, the entry of uniformed personnel can be a particular frustration for public servants already faced with limited opportunities to advance in that region.

There are no doubt some areas where DND/RCMP/CSIS training is an absolute requirement and the only source of qualified candidates for particular positions. Where this is so, open competitions can be used to bring them into the public service.

The highly specialized technical skills acquired in the uniformed services are often not what is required in the public service.

Managers seem to see nothing wrong with bringing in retirees from DND who completed their technical training over twenty years ago and haven't really used it much for the past ten years. These newcomers are brought in as PG-4s with no knowledge of procurement [purchasing and supply]. They are assigned purchasing assistants who are expected to teach these men all they need to know so they can apply for PG-5 positions.

The lack of opportunity to advance faced by public servants in these areas can result in poor morale, high frustration and eventually, high turnover.

THE FOREIGN SERVICE

Many departments have a limited number of foreign positions available for their employees, but these are for the most part one-time opportunities used for career development. At External Affairs and International Trade Canada, however, a foreign service career is built on such postings. The inherent difficulties of such a career in an era where two wage-earner couples are the norm, are very substantial for both men and women.

The acceptance of women in any numbers into the foreign service is a relatively recent phenomenon. Maternity leave for foreign service officers (FSO) has only existed since 1984. As recently as December 1988, the Department, which has the largest number of Executive (EX) level positions in the federal public service, ranked 32nd out of 33 departments surveyed with only 5.4% of the Management Category in the Department being

female. This was so despite a large increase in the intake of women into the service over the past several years.

There are four streams in the rotational service at External Affairs: social affairs, developmental assistance, political/economic, and the trade commissioner service. All of these streams involve “rotational” assignments involving a series of postings abroad, interspersed with appointments to headquarters. Postings offering the kind of experience and exposure that is rewarded with promotion to challenging, substantive positions are eagerly sought after. Access to “stretch” assignments and early exposure to managerial responsibilities are all critical to promotion. Promotions in the rotational service at the FS-1 and FS-2 levels are decided annually after a promotion board review of appraisals.

To provide the flexibility necessary for such a system, foreign service officers are “appointed to level” — that is, the classification of the position they are assigned to does not change their rank or “level” in the foreign service. A rotational FS-2 can serve in a position that has a higher classification without a promotion to that level or in a position that has a lower classification without a demotion. The level goes with the person, not with the job. Nevertheless, an opportunity to serve in a higher-level position is still advantageous, a “stretch” assignment, as opposed to spending a rotation doing a more junior job.

Despite the introduction of maternity leave, the promotion system described earlier has inherent limitations for women having children. To be eligible for consideration in the annual assessment for promotions an employee must have received four performance reviews. Since such reviews are written only if an employee has been in a job for at least six months, persons who have a series of short-term assignments of under six months, such as those associated with maternity leave, lose their eligibility to be considered for promotion. One woman commented:

The only way to avoid this problem is to time your deliveries for August 1, so maternity leave extends over the first half of the assignment year!

The short-term assignments occasioned by maternity leave are rarely challenging. One woman commented that she was assigned to a position,

which was very much below her level of experience, simply because they needed a “body” and she was available. She temporarily lost the opportunity to develop new skills and risked being labelled a “lightweight.”

Balancing work and family responsibilities is particularly difficult in rotational positions. The traditional way of dealing with this issue has been simple — don’t have a family. One woman said:

My experience in this department is that all the women who are heads of mission, with perhaps one exception, are single women. They have neither husbands nor children. I find it unacceptable that only single women can be accommodated within the system that we have.

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Successful foreign service women have been conditioned to think that they really can’t have a normal family life and be a successful foreign service woman. That has to reduce the appeal of life in the foreign service. We must start seeing women with normal family lives progress through the department, through jobs abroad.

The increase in two-income families has led to difficulties for many married members of the foreign service, both male and female. Spousal relocation is one aspect of this. Countries without reciprocal work agreements, such as Switzerland, are avoided. Many women spoke of the difficulty of finding a “portable” man, while at the same time acknowledging that more effort is often made to help a husband find work when his wife is posted, than is extended to the wives of foreign service men who would like to pursue their careers abroad. One woman described these efforts:

When a man gets posted overseas, they think about the wife’s job, but they really don’t work very hard at it. Whereas if a woman gets posted abroad, they are going to find a job for that guy, her husband.

Another woman added:

A lot of my male colleagues are married to very intelligent women who have careers while their husbands are stationed in Ottawa. When their husbands go abroad, they abandon their career.... The

foreign service is probably one of the worst departments as far as making family adjustments to suit a career.

Stereotyping and a corporate culture that has been described as “claustrophobically male” are challenges to all women in External Affairs and International Trade Canada, not just those in rotational positions. One woman wrote:

The discrimination I experienced in my first year in Ottawa in the Canadian foreign service was manageable....Things like having a male manager tell me to get my hair cut. From time to time I was asked if I was gay or hated men.

One woman commented that when she received her first posting in 1978, the head of post sent a telegram to Canada stating that he really did not want a woman in the job. When she persisted, despite being assured by others that she no doubt did not want to work for such a person, he was overruled by more senior managers. She feels that such situations still occur, although today “they are smarter, they don’t write it down.”

The undervaluing of women’s contributions noted in the previous chapter is also evident in the foreign service. One woman said that women tend to be placed “where they cannot do too much harm.” The appointment of female ambassadors is often show-cased as an indication of progress for women in the Department as a whole, but, again, the seemingly bright surface of progress at the most senior levels, masks a less attractive situation beneath. As one brief described it:

In the view of most rotational women officers, management attention seems to have been focused almost exclusively on ambassadorial appointments for women, with little attention being given to non-ambassadorial level postings and to the all-essential staffing at headquarters.

Even the shiny surface can seem flawed on close examination. For example, the Department was considering closing the Helsinki office, but decided to leave it open after public protest. A woman was then appointed as ambassador — “We already know how important they think that post is.” A similar pattern occurred in Guatemala.

One woman, the only female to be promoted in a recent round of promotions, was congratulated by a male colleague (who was not promoted) for being "*the* woman to be promoted." When she asked if he thought gender was the reason she had been promoted, he replied "Why else?" As outlined in one brief received by the Task Force:

There is an unfounded suspicion that despite the merit nature of the promotion process, there is a "quota" for women, especially at the EX-1 level, which calls into question the qualifications of all women on the promotion list. Much of this is perception, but it does colour attitudes and relationships between colleagues. And nothing serves to entrench this bias more at the senior levels than forwarding to the Minister initial lists for heads of post that do not contain the names of women and are therefore subsequently rejected. Men are then advised that they have been removed from the lists because of ministerial policy on women. This exacerbates systemic backlash.

The network of "old boys" who have served together in posts abroad over the years, can be a formidable obstacle for women in the Department. The nature of the assignment system means that it is often necessary to "lobby" the directors of different divisions in the pursuit of good assignments. Most of these positions are held by men, and the number of female mentors and role models is small.

One woman recently assumed a position normally filled by someone at a lower level than she had achieved. She was reluctant to do so, but was told there were no other opportunities. She had requested another vacant post, which was commensurate with her current level, but was told that there was already one woman in a similar position, and that they couldn't have two women in those posts. The position she wanted was then filled by a man who was at a lower level than the position required — a "stretch" assignment for him.

One woman, who is seriously considering leaving the Department, perceives that the top management thought process follows this line "This woman really needs more seasoning. If she does well there, maybe in five years we will give her something else." She believes that the

Department is more willing to take a risk on a man, and that this translates into more “stretch” and high-profile assignments.

Another woman, who felt that there were “immense” cultural barriers at External Affairs and International Trade Canada concluded:

It is not that they are awful people, but that they see women differently and do not provide adequate opportunities for women’s advancement.

ORDER-IN-COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

In Chapter 3, we referred to the most senior levels of the public service, where appointments are made by the Governor-in-Council on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

Technically, these are beyond our terms of reference, but we include this brief note because these are the most senior jobs in the system, and because, as a member of our Deputy Ministers’ Advisory Committee put it: “You can break glass ceilings more easily from above than from below.” Furthermore, deputy ministers and heads of post are effective role models and — when they choose to be — mentors for women.

There are five categories of order-in-council appointments:

1. senior public service appointments (deputy minister);
2. agencies, boards and commissions;
3. federal court judiciary;
4. heads of post (ambassadors, high commissioners, heads of delegation);
5. the Senate.

The first woman deputy minister was appointed in 1972. There are now 7 — 13 % of the total, as well as three associate deputy minister level appointments. There are 11 “deputy minister equivalent” positions filled by women — 16% of the total. The first woman was appointed head of post in the foreign service in 1958. Now there are 13 — 12.6% of the total. The first woman was appointed to the Supreme Court of Canada in 1982. Now there are three. There are currently four women on the board of directors of the Bank of Canada. Of all order-in-council appointments, the percentage of women appointed now stands at 30% of the total, double the level of 1985.

There are seldom formal competitions for deputy-level positions. The expectations are that incumbents should have high levels of skills and knowledge, relevant experience or managerial capabilities and abilities to direct, manage or assess situations of the highest order of importance to the development of public policy. A keen sense of judgement and ethics are also essential criteria.

Three major factors either delay or accelerate the rate at which women assume and retain the positions at the very top of the federal public service as deputy ministers, heads of agencies or federal corporations, heads of mission, even the judiciary. The first is male bias, the second is the level of political commitment and the third is the critical mass issue — the rule of three.

There have been a number of studies in the past decade of the cultural influences that prevent women from reaching the very top levels of corporations, professional firms and other organizations. Jacobs and Hardesty in their book *Success and Betrayal, the Crisis of Women in Corporate America* argue that there is an invisible “glass ceiling” that prevents women from reaching the very top ranks. This unexpected barrier seems to be related to the “comfort factor.” As the authors put it:

Making a promotion is based on all the objective information available, but a large part of it is gut feel. You see younger versions of yourself and you know they will knock down walls to get to the goal. Or you see someone with the traits of a good friend....

They continue:

Women can see these traits in women candidates and feel comfortable picking them. They've also seen a wide range of successful males, enough to get a good idea as to which men will be successful. Men, however, have not had much familiarity with women leaders. When those men see a woman who looks like a good candidate, they don't have that same gut reassurance. They see someone they feel they really don't understand, they have doubts.

This lack of “comfort” is one of the fundamental reasons that women have not been appointed to the positions in the federal public service where the greatest amount of power is vested. For example, no women have been appointed to the top in the central agencies of Finance, Treasury Board

Secretariat (TBS) and the Privy Council Office (PCO). These agencies make policy and research decisions that have great impact on all other operations of the federal government. In addition, the last several rounds of appointments have made it clear that the route to a deputy minister position must include time spent at a senior level in one of these central agencies, most often PCO, TBS or Finance.

To date, women have had only very limited representation at the most senior levels of central agencies. No woman has ever held the position of secretary or deputy secretary in the Privy Council Office or the Treasury Board. Only recently have women been appointed to assistant secretary positions at PCO after a period of time when they were absent altogether from these ranks. With the exception of one order-in-council appointment to an associate deputy minister position, no woman has ever held a position at assistant deputy minister level or above in the Department of Finance. Similarly, the departments of External Affairs and Justice, which have quasi-central agency status, and the prestige that goes with it, have never had a woman as deputy minister.

One senior woman who quit the public service describes the situation she faced:

There was real blockage for women at the “elite” departments. They were the departments where, if you wanted to move and to be a high flyer, either Finance or Treasury Board was it. There were not a lot of qualified women, but it is not as if they didn’t exist. How come none of them were in the two elite departments? ... Well, they still aren’t.

The second element of importance to the advancement of women to the top — the level of political commitment — has a profound effect. When the Prime Minister committed himself to a 30% target for the appointment of women by order-in-council, this sent a clear message that capable women exist and should be appointed. When the Secretary of State for External Affairs directed the inclusion of women in all lists of recommendations for heads of post, the proportion of women appointed rose from 1.8% (2 women appointees out of 113) in 1984 to 12.6% (13 women out of 103 appointees) in 1989.

The third element affecting the progress of women to the top is the concept of the "rule of three." As one interviewee said:

To appoint one woman is significant, to appoint two will provide impact, but to appoint three is to begin the process of critical mass.

Women at all levels in the public service told us that they felt better able to relax and do their job once they were no longer an oddity — a single example of their kind — but part of a group of at least three. Once this point has been reached, progress accelerates.

Deputy ministers we talked to believe that the credibility of women as candidates for senior appointments is firmly established. The number of women deputies has reduced the "built-in male bias"; the political-level commitment to the appointment of senior women is now pervasive; and the "rule of three" is operating in all but a few of the most senior levels of the public service. As one deputy put it:

Brains are passed out randomly, and 50% of them land up in women's heads. Why would you limit yourself to half the supply, and take the bottom half to fill your positions when you could have the top of the other half?

CHAPTER 8

How They Coped

When I was first applying for a job, one of the guys asked me if I knew what job I was applying for. I said: “Yes, a firefighter.” He asked me if I was sure I wanted to apply for it and I answered: “Yes, it seems like a good job and I think that I am qualified for it.” He replied that it wasn’t really a woman’s kind of a job, and I said: “Too bad.”

Timing is everything, and the coping strategies developed by women often depended on when they joined the public service and the category they chose to enter. Yet both the barriers identified by women who contributed to the Task Force, and the coping strategies that worked for them, showed surprising consistency over time.

The young firefighter quoted here faced the same stereotyping barrier as the foreign service officer who, on receiving her first foreign posting a few years ago, was told that the head of post did not want a woman in the job. Their coping strategies were the same — fight for the job and the principle, in an assertive manner.

Many women highlighted the coping strategies that worked for them. Most women cited similar strategies and personal attributes or skills that were most effective.

Their descriptions of these strategies implied a recognition that all employees must accept some measure of responsibility for their own level of satisfaction with their work environment and for their own progression. Many referred to the current public service environment with its emphasis on downsizing, in which promotions are few and managers are unwilling

to risk scarce resources on "potential" when they can invest in a proven track record.

The following pages outline the coping strategies that women, and some men, most often endorsed as having been successful.

BALANCING CAREER AND PERSONAL LIFE

Many women strove to balance their work and their personal lives. This enabled them to maintain a sense of perspective when faced with impediments in the workplace. They viewed their careers not as a vertical climb at a steady pace, but as a combination of peaks, valleys and plateaus. Starting with the setting of realistic goals, usually over a five-year time frame, many women stressed that these goals changed throughout a career, depending on a number of circumstances.

The most difficult balancing relates to childrearing.

Quite frankly, there is a period of time when physically and mentally you have to make some trade-offs between your children and your career. When I was raising my children I simply could not have coped with the kind of career I have now or had before my first child.

It is important to understand that the respondents did not consider this "self-parking" implied a lack of commitment to a job and its duties. Nor does it imply a permanent lack of interest in career progression. Instead, it represented a conscious, responsible decision to remain with a "manageable" position for a period of time in deference to personal considerations. They did not see it as appropriate at that time to seek a promotion with its demands on time and energy.

For some women, the most appropriate decision was to remain childless. For others, a few years of care and nurturing leave were a more suitable solution. For still others, extensive child care arrangements allowed them to cope with both motherhood and increasingly demanding positions. The choices were highly personal. Key to these coping strategies was the recognition that they had to make trade-offs, choose the most suitable approach and make the required temporary adjustments.

My advice to young women starting out on a career is ... to get your career moving before you take on a lot of other responsibilities such as children. I don't think you can consider yourself a success if you neglect your family to concentrate on a career. You have to look after your whole life.

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A woman who wants to have her family and keep her job, but work reduced hours, is not going to advance as quickly as a man who didn't take a day off. But when the woman returns full-time she will get these opportunities again. You have to look at the whole picture of what a woman wants to accomplish. You can't say a woman is a failure or not successful, she has just done other things. And I don't think a career is the only thing in a woman's life.

But achieving a balance between family and career requires strong family support. Asked how her husband viewed her trades-related job, one woman said:

He loves me. He knows that in order to do a good job in anything I am doing I have to be happy at it and he knew I was not happy being a clerk. It was not my cup of tea.

With or without children, a balanced life was repeatedly recommended as the key to maintaining a perspective on the workplace and its challenges.

Part of your value has to do with distance, has to do with humour, has to do with knowledge in a wide variety of areas. And yes, you could run faster and faster in smaller and smaller circles and you could certainly get the Cabinet document produced for tomorrow morning. And it would have been a better decision not to have gone to the theatre, it would have been a better decision to work on the Cabinet document, but life is full of tomorrow mornings.

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There are women who are very bright, very motivated and who are killing themselves because they are trying to do it all, and I guess sometimes my advice to them is — "Go home and have a really long chat with the mirror and see what your real priorities are for this five-year period."

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Many of the women felt that arriving at a personal definition of success was an essential first step in balancing work and personal life. As might be expected, their definitions varied tremendously.

I've come to see that the issue is not one of career progression, but of satisfaction. In the past I was just another bright kid. Twenty years from now people will not remember an obscure public servant who was a good systems manager; but perhaps some will remember the person who genuinely cared for the people he worked with and served.

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My next job has to be do-able. My next career move does not have to be a promotion, but interesting and "people compatible." Quality of the job rather than promotion per se becomes more important.

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Once you are at a certain level of economic satisfaction, gratification from the job itself is key. Something that will be real; that will have an impact on people; something new and exciting that provides a new experience.

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My primary concern is job satisfaction, by which I mean that good work can be done which is useful to the country and useful to Canadians. I don't wish to move into management particularly, unless I can lead a group of people doing the sort of work I do. I don't want to be only pushing papers, but I might be interested in creating a good research unit. I feel that a good manager can provide a lot of support or boosterism to her staff, facilitate their doing good and important work, create an excellent environment.

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Advancement is defined in the system as monetary increases. But for me, advancement is the increased ability to change the system of the federal public service.

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To me advancement means being able to move from one position to another, including lateral moves to do the type of administrative work I want to do ... To stay current and useful without a major career change.

PLANNING AHEAD

Having set these goals, how did these women meet them with the right job? Part of the answer was an organized approach, and a commitment to marketing themselves.

I learned to analyze the job description, I learned to associate it with my work experience and I learned to talk with some of the managers involved before the board so they understood how personally interested I was. I started to do a compendium of the most interesting questions. I learned to keep track of these things. I finally reached a position where I was very confident going into boards, just based on the work that I had done.

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The way that I approached unacceptable job offers was not to say that I was insulted by them, but to tell them that I would look into it and get back to them. Then I did my homework and went back to them and thanked them for thinking of me. I also told them the reasons I was not interested in the job. In every case I really made a serious effort to see what the situation was. Gradually the offers started to get better and then I had to make a more careful judgement about whether or not it was a good career move for me.

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You have to make sure that you get a little bit of the spotlight. You don't have to be arrogant, sometimes you can do it by simply making a funny comment. Or sometimes you can do it by making a perceptive interjection. But you have to sell yourself. People have to recognize you as a force and you have to put yourself in circumstances where you get that recognition.

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Personally, I advanced by nagging; I constantly reminded my supervisors of my abilities and of the promises that were made to me when I joined the department.

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You have to be a tiger, be professionally aggressive, outgoing. When I joined the public service, I said, "I will sink or swim on my own here." And I have found that success is directly linked to individual efforts. Because relatively few people do work similar to mine in the Government I must take the initiative to find out what is going on outside my department.

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Career planning requires self-initiative; employees must ask questions, look for information; apply in competitions.

MENTORS

Finding a mentor (also referred to as a "guide," "coach" or "translator") was frequently mentioned as the most important key to a successful career. Mentors can explain the complexities of the public service and its formal and informal systems while also providing exposure and visibility. But developing a mentoring relationship can be difficult. It is often hampered by the lack of senior women to act as mentors and the difficulty of achieving the personal chemistry necessary for a mentoring relationship to evolve.

For a man to be a mentor for a woman puts them at risk of being accused of having a sexual liaison. People go into the rumour mode about someone sleeping their way to the top. This deters males who may want to help women.

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In each place I work, I try to find someone who is obviously more experienced than I am for a mentor. In some cases, it is my immediate boss. Sometimes, though, when you have a good rapport with someone who is a mentor to you, people will assume there is a sexual relationship.

Despite this pitfall, many women managed to find mentors of one sort or another.

I've had the support of people who have ... taken an interest in me and pushed me to move ahead. They gave me advice on how I might better prepare myself for anything — and that is very critical.

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I have had several mentors and I think that this is a great strength. If several people in your business believe in you and think of you and expect you to do well, you have a lot of people standing up for you, putting your name forward and calling on you if they see something you may be interested in. The more people that are highly thought of and think highly of you, the better.

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I had a mentor who was very, very helpful to me. I learned so much from her in terms of strategies, approaches and how to deal with people.

Words of caution were offered on two aspects of mentoring: learning to recognize a mentor and knowing when to move on. Many women commented on the problem of recognizing mentors.

One thing I will always regret was not pursuing a senior woman who was trying to be a mentor to me. I didn't know about mentors at the time. She really helped me find my place but wasn't the sort to push herself on you, but she did what she could to help me. It gradually dawned on me that I was getting help and I tried to help others. I realize now that I always had mentors.

Similarly, they found it difficult to leave a mentor.

I think what a woman has to do is say "Well, I have grown as far as I can grow under this man, it is time for me to spread my wings."

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I think a lot of women develop through mentors, which can at a certain stage be detrimental. It is difficult to jump over and become parallel to your mentors.

It is important to note that despite the importance attached to a mentoring relationship, our research has indicated that formalized mentoring programs do not work. Some amount of personal chemistry between the

two participants is integral to the success of such a relationship and this cannot be forced by way of a “systematized buddy system.” This is clearly an area where perceptions and personal initiative are needed to succeed.

Several women mentioned the need to recognize the difference between mentoring and “cronyism.” Mentoring is the fostering of recognized skills and abilities in a manner that most benefits both the individual concerned and the public service as well. Cronyism, by contrast, is favouritism based solely on personal partiality, with no thought given to the appropriateness of the arrangement for either the individual concerned or for the system as a whole. Mentoring is an evolving on-the-job learning process based on acknowledged competence; cronyism is active favouritism, irrespective of ability and based on personal friendship.

ROLE MODELS

It is not always possible to find a mentor. It is almost always possible, however, to find a role model. Most often, a role model is simply someone who sets an example — who has a professional manner that employees admire and would feel comfortable emulating. As the following quotes indicate, role models are often simply good managers, setting good examples:

I have to give my boss full credit for an excellent personnel policy where he is looking out for people two and three years ahead. He is very concerned about human resource development and it shows. All of the three people who are involved in the decentralization of this branch have been involved in these programs for a long time and he’s made sure, for example, that I have someone working with me now who is my lifeline for the future.

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A colleague of mine was a very nurturing person. He tried to develop the people who worked for him, which I think is very important. I think that a lot more directors should have this policy. I was very young and he would make sure that I was involved in meetings and would make sure that I knew that I was supposed to be there. It certainly had a positive effect on me. And it wasn’t just because I was a woman. He would have done the same thing for anyone.

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One man I worked for was really great. He said “Now what I think you should do is get a file folder, put FUTURE on the front of it, stick it in your drawer and always be thinking of it and looking at opportunities down the road.” I’ve had co-op students since and I say the same thing. I think he was truly concerned about my future, ahead of his own, at that point. It is in human nature to wish the best for someone else as long as it doesn’t affect your own future. But he was able to do it.

Role models can set an example from the top down —

(In a letter to the college council) “I said that I thought it was time for the college to take a stand on the degradation of women on the campus” and three days later (the principal) came around to every single trades trainee in the classroom and said that this kind of sexist action and language is inappropriate in an institute of higher learning. If it continues you will be thrown out of school and you will not get an apprenticeship anywhere in this province.

Or from below:

There’s a fellow I have worked with who has been particularly good. In a way he makes a joke of the situation, saying, for example, “She’s my boss.” In a way that sort of sounds like “Can you believe that she’s my boss?” Nonetheless he still gets the message through and he’s made it very easy for me in that regard. Men immediately turn to him and he’ll turn to me and do as I say.

Timing is a factor here, too; one woman working in a trade-related job said:

We are so new to the work force that we have few or no role models. My mother was at home. We weren’t groomed for the idea that we might be a plumber or a brain surgeon. When my daughter looks at her mother or her father, she sees both bring home the bacon. She doesn’t have any preconceived notions about what she should not do.

CLEARING THE HURDLES

In the two preceding chapters, we saw that many women felt that in the public service they could still experience an unfriendly corporate culture, outdated attitudes and even open hostility. How best to cope with these barriers? Again, there was an overwhelming consensus as to what works. First, a positive attitude, a sense of humour and a refusal to be held down by the limitations of others.

I think that accepting defeat or thinking that there is nothing you can do about a situation is a big barrier. Young men and women must be taught to solve problems and to come up with analytical solutions to the barriers they encounter.

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My approach in all these jobs has been to go in and do a good job, do what has to be done, and follow my instincts. Inevitably, they come around because they see that I am quite competent and that I will listen to them and make my own judgments. If some continue to harbour hostility, that's their problem, not mine.

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I was a young woman, and, to make it worse, I did not look like everybody else. For an employer, I am a double whammy, a black woman. I learned at a very early age not to wonder if they are concerned about my religion, my colour or my sex, because I cannot be bothered if I don't make it my problem. I don't have the problem, they do; I refuse to take on their problems.

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First of all, I believe very strongly that if one goes out and meets people who have these [negative] attitudes and opens up dialogue with them and demonstrates that good results can be achieved, then good results will still be achieved and this is the way I deal with it, by maintaining the dialogue, by working with people and by delivering the expected results.

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I think first of all that every woman who is going to be in this sort of situation has got to have a good balance in that she must have absolute confidence in her ability to do the job. And one must have

the courage, and it is truly courage, to face down that very difficult feat of identifying which is really a form of prejudice and stare it down and deal with it. It's important that one not be intimidated by the fact that one is fairly certain that some people are thinking that the job cannot be done by a woman, or that some people are thinking that the job should not be done by a woman. I think that the first thing that one really has to have is an absolutely superb sense of humour.

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When I was a broadcaster I had to tell the producer what to do and he didn't like it and I wondered "How do you do it? Do I put my foot down and tell him I'm the boss? Do I try to seduce him into doing what I want him to do?" I decided that I wasn't going to seduce him and I wasn't going to put my foot down either, but I was going to gradually affirm myself and have rational discussions with him on how I thought it should be done ... and so I found my way of exercising my authority and it was between these two options.

Women who felt they could be their own worst enemy stressed the need to avoid the obvious traps out there, such as the eager over-achiever in the suicide job, or their own unrealistic expectations.

If you get pushed into something that is beyond you and you fall flat on your face, that's it — you fall all by yourself.

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I couldn't respect this person because of the views he held. But we decided, kind of between the two of us, that, O.K., we could have a good professional relationship [but] we didn't have to like each other.

TAKING THE HIGH ROAD

Many women tried to cope by rising above perceived injustices.

Eventually you start feeling that the barriers were just hurdles or irritants and because you conquered them, you forget them. You ignore the people that are verbally cruel or who discriminate

against you. You take the attitude that you are not going to let that bother you and you rise above it.

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I was labelled an aggressive bitch and I knew who was saying it. So I picked up the phone and I called them and I said "I have heard some rumours but I know that you would never say those things. I mean, you are my colleague and I just know that you wouldn't say them. But I think that it is really important that you know you are being quoted that way." They said "Of course, you are right. Of course we wouldn't say those things." That's been most effective, looking back. Always take the high road on this sort of thing.

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I know that they don't think that firehalls are the proper place for women but they don't say so to my face. And I am not going to get into it with them, there is absolutely no point in that. I am pleasant to them and they are to me.

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For 15 to 20 years there have been strugglers coming up, and you might think of me as one of them. I have found my little upward path by being as pleasant as I can in speaking to the world. I really don't get mad at people when they do mean things because I feel sorry for them. I go under or sideways around people who obstruct me; I am not blocked, but just diverted, for I never take my eye off the goal post. I find my way honestly. I don't mind hard work.

But sometimes the high road leads to the exit sign. Some women made it clear that when nothing can be gained by staying, a good coping strategy is to leave. Said one woman who followed the exit route:

I spent a long time maintaining my credentials ... I continued to publish. I continued to read, I did everything I could ... to keep my capacity going. In a system based on merit, which I believed this was, I would end up at a logical destination. I was proven wrong.

The cost of this option to the public service is discussed in Chapter 9.

CHAPTER 9

The Consequences

We have established that women in the federal public service are compressed into low levels of pay and status and confined to a few large occupational groups that provide poor access to promotion; that they advance in relatively frequent small increments starting from low levels and moving within occupational groups rather than across them; that if nothing changes, it could be another half century before anything approaching equity is achieved and that women do perceive gender-based barriers to advancement in the federal public service and can describe them clearly.

What difference does it make? Why should the President of the Treasury Board and his colleagues care about the gender balance of the public service, so long as the work gets done?

Of course the work does get done — but not as effectively as it could be done if the capabilities of women in the public service were not being wasted. This wastage takes place in three ways:

- when women are consistently employed in jobs below their qualifications and capacities;
- when women do not have access to training and work experience that develops their potential;
- when women lose self-confidence and motivation because their capacities are ignored or undervalued.

Discrimination costs, whether or not it is intentional.

This cost is significant. Health and Welfare Canada carried out a major demographic review in 1989 and published the results in a document titled,

Charting Canada's Future.¹ A chart on page 11 of that document shows what would happen to Canada's capacity to produce if the participation of women in the labour force was accelerated, and if at the same time the misallocation of resources arising from discrimination against women workers was eliminated. By 2006, if both these changes occurred, Gross Domestic Product per person in Canada would be 20% higher than it would be if present trends continue. Removing discrimination alone (without accelerating participation) would increase output by 10%. Since the federal government is the largest employer in Canada, it is reasonable to suppose that removing barriers to women would produce comparable benefits.

There is also loss of valuable capacity when women leave the public service at the intermediate level, as we have shown they do, particularly in the Scientific and Professional Category.

The analysis of operational data described in Chapters 3 and 4 first drew our attention to the problem of "leavers." It showed us that, for years women have been leaving the public service at a greater rate than men. This is particularly true of the Scientific and Professional Category and the "feeder level" for the Senior Management groups. To learn more about the leavers, Statistics Canada carried out for us a "cohort analysis" of public servants for the period 1978 to 1987. The results of these studies are reported in Chapter 4 of this report.

At the same time, the Task Force commissioned a special series of exit interviews with former public servants (41 women, 7 men) to ask them why they had left and what had happened afterwards. Both these interviews and the cohort analysis confirmed what the numbers told us: that the public service does lose proportionally more women than men, and that they don't leave to make more money or because they dislike their jobs. They leave because they face one or more of the barriers described in Chapter 6:

- attitudes, which keeps them away from advancement and development;
- a corporate culture, which seems suffocating, if not hostile;
- extreme difficulty in balancing work and family responsibilities.

¹ *Charting Canada's Future: A Report of the Demographic Review, Health and Welfare Canada, 1989.*

One of the leavers told us:

If you are a secretary or clerk in the public service, you are always seen as that and it's awfully hard to break barriers. If you go outside of government, employers look at you as a person with capabilities. They look at your work performance and your background and they give you a chance.

Others said:

Near the end, I was starting to feel I was a very untalented person. I had a hopeless feeling that there was nothing positive I could do. It didn't seem that getting another job in the public service would help.

and:

While the work is fascinating, you come up against a network that is very hard to penetrate. Women feel they are not accepted. They feel men are trying to keep it as much as possible a male environment.

and:

The department I worked for was very male-dominated. It's not that you are discriminated against, it's just that you feel alien so much of the time. You don't really feel a part of it.

Exit interviews have to be treated with particular care in assessing the former employment situation. After all, everyone likes to justify a decision. But these comments came from women who were successful in their work and enthusiastic about it.

The age of the interviewees on leaving the Government ranged from 26 to 56 (average 38.25) and they had between 2.5 and 20 years of federal government service (average 10.5). Twelve left between 1979 and 1984 and the remainder (36) between 1985 and 1989. Interviewees were highly educated, with 11 holding one or more bachelors degrees; eight having partially completed work towards a masters degree; 23 having completed one or more masters degrees or other post-graduate degree; and two holding Ph.Ds. Almost all interviewees reported having received performance appraisals on the high end of the scale ("fully satisfactory," "superior" or, occasionally, "outstanding") in their last year in government.

Particularly striking was the enthusiasm shown by interviewees for their field of work. Many expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the quality and type of work they did in the public service, noting that they had opportunities to do things they never could have done in the private sector. Others underlined the importance they attached to the work done by public servants or stated that the experience they gained in the Government provided the springboard to their current career.

The highlights of my professional life took place in the federal public service.

.

I don't think I'll ever again work with as collectively as bright a group of people as I worked with in the Government.

.

I regret that I had to leave but I didn't think I had a lot of options. I wish things hadn't been like that.

And yet they left.

No employer expects to achieve a zero quit-rate. Indeed, it is the policy of the federal government to encourage movement between the public and private sector. But the nature and degree of movement described in our research is costing the Government the services of capable experienced people, and thwarting its efforts to achieve a better gender balance in the public service.

This is apt to get worse before it gets better. The Treasury Board's own analysis of the outlook for the public service in the year 2000 highlights the need to attract and keep women employees.²

In the Public Service, the proportion of women increased from 33 per cent in 1973 to 43 per cent in 1988, and will probably continue to rise because women are expected to comprise over half of those entering the labour force in the coming decade...

The growing presence of women in the Public Service also raises a number of important and recurring issues about the advancement and training of women. At present, female employees are concentrated in clerical and secretarial jobs, the very areas that are likely candidates for automation.

² Work Force 2000, Treasury Board, 1989

A woman who manages a large and busy airport put it more graphically:

A senior manager and his staff of today could be standing together and he would have a couple of young people just out of college, both white, one male and one female; and he has got a group of middle managers, all male, and a couple of executives and the Deputy Minister standing there. He needs to ask himself what that picture will look like in 20 years — first, if he starts developing people now, and second if he doesn't. In 20 years, if we don't develop people, there will be about two white males standing there and he is not going to be able to run a business. If he starts developing people, that line-up is going to have some black faces and some brown faces and a lot more women in it — and he is going to be able to do business. But he has to start now.

Many private-sector employers have such a picture in mind. As Volume 4 demonstrates, the amount of material in management journals about the role of women in the labour force — especially the role of women in management — has been high and rising. The Conference Board of Canada, for instance, says:

Demographic and social developments are having far-reaching implications for Canadian organizations. These developments are forcing employers to reassess their recruitment, selection and retention policies.

Nor is this preoccupation confined to Canada.³

The organisation of the 1990s must increasingly depend on women as a source of qualified labour.

In the UK, nearly half the women now working are in part-time employment. The majority of women continue to work in "women's jobs" with 77 per cent of women working in catering, cleaning, hairdressing and other professional services and clerical jobs. A 1983 Trades Union Congress report found that nearly 30 per cent of women working in cleaning and catering had professional qualifications. The challenge to the company of the future

3 Maggie Steel, "Managing a Female Work Force: Recruitment and Retention Strategies," *The Economist Publications, Multinational Business*, Autumn 1989: p. 33.

is to correct this state of affairs and ensure that the best talent available (50 per cent male and 50 per cent female) is given the fullest opportunity to contribute to the success of the organization.

Responses to this challenge involve more than recruitment of the right skills. Retaining the skills acquired or developed within an organization is equally important.

Another serious consequence of barriers to women in the public service is the extent to which it undercuts the credibility of the federal government.

The federal government has been committed to policies of equal opportunity for women for 20 years. As we have seen (Chapter 2), much has been done; but the continued compression and concentration of women (Chapters 3 and 4) creates the impression that the effort of the past 20 years has affected only a few high flyers — not the general situation of women. As the availability of qualified women in the labour force increases, there will be growing pressure on the Government to tackle the remaining barriers. Unless the federal government finds ways to change the attitudes and practices that create the barriers, its commitment to equal opportunity will be questioned.

The pressures of change are already being felt within the public service, not only by women who feel constrained, but also by men who are facing added competition in a time of restraint. It is not easy to be on the leading edge of a socio-economic revolution, and that is where the men and women in the public service are now.

Rapid and profound change tends to give rise to resentment and tension, a sense of exploitation, a backlash against new attitudes, suspicion of new approaches, and a conviction that “the system” is unfair. These feelings emerged in some of the responses to the questionnaire survey. Seventy-nine percent of women and 75% of men believed that a job opportunity was not posted until the person to fill it had already been selected. Eighty-three percent of women and 78% of men believed that “who you know” counts more than “what you know” in getting a promotion. In the interviews, we heard:

Morale problems in the public service are rampant. They're damaging the attitude people have towards themselves. They're damaging peoples' ability to work.

.

There's lots of bureaucrat-bashing. I don't like being told constantly that I can't be trusted.

.

The public service is now the employer of last resort. Fifteen or 20 years ago, it was the place to work.

This is not the first survey to show low morale in the federal public service. Partly in response to these concerns, the Government announced on December 12, 1989, an initiative "to renew the Public Service of Canada" under the title "Public Service 2000." A task force of 62 deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers, supported by 29 personnel consultants, regional ADM's and central agency resources has been established. Its mandate is to:

- make the Government's employment and personnel management regime less complicated and burdensome for managers and employees alike;
- reduce central administrative controls so as to give deputy ministers greater freedom to manage their departments and clearer accountability for results;
- clarify and simplify the roles of central agencies and of systems of personnel and administrative control throughout the government; and
- develop innovative ways to encourage efficiency and improve program delivery.

There is no reference in the announcement of "Public Service 2000" to the issue of barriers to the advancement of women in the public service, presumably because it was already under study by this Task Force. We have had the opportunity to discuss mutual concerns with members of the Public Service 2000 group and our recommendations are made in the light of their activities.

Reducing the tension generated by the changing gender balance of the work force would contribute to improved morale in the public service. That is why the management issues involved in this change need to be addressed directly and forthrightly by the senior management of the public service.

In this chapter, we have described the consequences of continuing as we are:

- reduced output;
- loss of talent;
- impaired credibility;
- low morale.

In the next chapter, we will discuss what can be done.

CHAPTER 10

What To Do Now

Twenty years ago, the federal public service set out to improve the representation of women in its work force.

This it has largely achieved: women are now 44% of the labour force in Canada, and approximately the same in the federal public service.

But beneath the veneer of representation lie the problems of compression and concentration.

In the public service as a whole, women are employed in numbers that reflect their participation in the labour force, but they are largely confined to a few occupational groups and compressed into the lower levels of pay and status. They face barriers to movement into key occupational groups and to advancement to the top levels, even of occupational groups in which they predominate. They are not employed up to their potential and they leave the public service because this is so. Women now advance slightly faster than men in the public service as a whole, but most of this advancement is in very small increments starting at low levels and the current rate of advancement will not bring about necessary change.

Meanwhile, the ageing of the public service and the changing demographics of the labour force will require the public service to rely more heavily on women as candidates for recruitment and employment. Unless the barriers to advancement are diminished, the public service will not be able to attract and retain capable, well-educated women, for whom they will have to compete with a private sector that already recognizes the challenge it faces in securing the necessary work force in the next decade.

It is time to enter a new phase of the effort to achieve a balance of gender in the federal public service.

The object of the exercise is not to shift to under-utilizing men, but to reduce barriers so that competent women will compete at any level and in any group with equally competent men, and to recognize that a competent woman is not necessarily a clone of a competent man.

We are not suggesting a quick fix. Phase I, (overall representation) of the move to gender balance was embarked on at a time when the public service was undergoing a rapid expansion. Phase II (balanced representation) will begin in the context of a significant downsizing. It will be more of a challenge to management.

We have four basic recommendations:

1. **Take gender balance seriously. Make a commitment to achieve it.**
2. **Treat the lack of gender balance as a management problem, not as a women's issue peripheral to management. Make its solution a part of the management process and track progress openly.**
3. **Take action on system improvements that have been recommended in the past.**
4. **Don't expect the system improvements to solve the problem alone: tackle the attitudes and the corporate culture.**

There are two issues on which we are not making specific recommendations, because they have been well-documented elsewhere and highly credible recommendations have been made by others. These two issues are child care and the pursuit of pay equity. It should not be assumed that because we make no recommendations we consider these issues less important than the matters on which we do recommend. It is clear from the evidence we have presented that adequate provision for the care of children and further progress on pay equity are both essential to a better balance of gender in the public service.

Recommendation 1: Commitment

No significant change occurs in the public service without visible, clearly-articulated, persistent commitment from the top. Where such commitment exists, public service management has a very good record of accomplishing what it sets out to do.

Accordingly, we believe that the Government should now declare its intention of embarking on a new phase of the effort to achieve an appropriate balance of gender in the public service. This phase would involve:

- eliminating the compression of women into the lower levels of the public service;
- reducing the concentration of women in a small number of occupational groups; and,
- improving the representation of women in senior management and order-in-council appointments.

These goals are achievable and measurable. They are consistent with the general goal of good management of the public service, and they are also consistent with existing government policies on such matters as equal opportunity, employment equity and pay equity.

The first two goals of Phase II require action at all levels in departments and agencies. Some of the specific steps that can be undertaken are set forth below. The third goal is within the purview of the Privy Council Office: departments and agencies can assist by ensuring that senior women receive the range of experience and development that can make them credible candidates for consideration when a strategically significant job is filled by order-in-council.

Our analysis makes it clear that the achievement of full gender balance must be managed, because it will not happen automatically, even with a modest edge for women in the rate of advancement and the existence of programs to support that edge. If there is to be substantial improvement in the next decade, specific steps must be taken to bring about change.

Some of these steps are suggested in the remaining recommendations, but we should note that we are not providing a detailed blueprint for management. Even with a clear commitment to full gender balance, and a high

priority attached to it, action must be taken in the context of other commitments and priorities in departments with widely varying starting points and differing degrees of flexibility. The best way to achieve the results we seek is to challenge managers to find ways to bring them about.

Recommendation 2: Management

We do not recommend the creation of a new agency to manage Phase II of gender balancing, nor the creation of special positions to support this change. Managing change is the job of the deputy ministers and of operational management.

Gender balancing should be dealt with in the management committees and should have a bearing on a wide range of management decisions. It should not be pushed out to the margins of management concern, or down into the system to be treated mechanically. Deputies may want to assign a member of management committee to have particular concern for progress in gender balancing, but it should not automatically be "the woman" on the committee, or the human resource manager, and it should not be a member who is hostile to the objective and will ensure that nothing disturbing gets done. It should certainly be someone who has a clear grasp of the goals and an understanding of the content of this report.

Goal I for management is to eliminate the compression of women into the lower levels of pay and status in the public service.

Goal II is to reduce the concentration of women in a small number of occupational groups. This goal is expressed as "reducing" rather than "eliminating" because the problem of concentration is pervasive in the external labour force from which the public service draws its new members. There is not, for example, a gender-balanced supply of engineers. Much of what must be done to correct this problem will take place outside the public service, but public policy can support such change. Management can take steps to reduce the concentration within the public service and it can take care to "keep ahead of the curve" of change that is taking place in the labour force as a whole: for example, the rapid increase in availability of women graduates in non-traditional disciplines.

Much depends on an examination of the degree of compression and confinement in organizational units and the extent to which some of the barriers described in this report are getting in the way of improvement.

We recommend continued use of the methods the Task Force has employed to determine the degree of compression and concentration of women in the public service and the rate at which it is changing.

Movement toward the goal of eliminating compression of women into low levels of pay and status in the public service was, we found, hard to measure by any number now used regularly in public service reporting. We have described elsewhere in this report the development and application of what we came to call the “Equity Index.” This enabled us to come to grips with the phenomenon of compression and to understand its impact on the experience of women in the federal public service. It is not an exact measure, but it is an extremely useful indicator of the degree of compression and the rate of change.

We recommend continued use of the Equity Index for analysis of compression and for reporting progress.

Application of the Equity Index as a management tool raises some questions of consistency and “best practice” that this report does not address. **We therefore recommend that responsibility for further development of the Index be lodged with an existing agency — one that is clearly seen as an analysis and support unit rather than a control unit.**

Movement towards the goal of reducing concentration of women in a few occupational groups can be judged by changes in the proportion of women in occupational groups in which they are now under-represented and over-represented. The Public Service Commission already reports regularly and in detail on the representation of women by occupational group and level and by department. All that is required is to **present this information in such a way that it can be used as a management tool in support of the goal of reducing concentration. To this should be added the use of the techniques used in this report to enable the Task Force to examine the dynamics of advancement in the federal public service.**

Use of these analytical tools will help managers to focus their efforts on the specific situations existing in their own units. (Where small units are concerned, an eyeball should be all that is needed to assess concentration and compression.)

Much was accomplished in Phase I by focusing on representation of women in the Management Category. Further progress in this category should not now be neglected — at the present rate, women would reach 30% of the Management Category in 20 years — but in Phase II particular attention should be paid to the groups and levels in which concentration and compression are most marked.

Phase II should focus on the middle levels of the public service, in the categories where the separation ratio is high; on the clerical and secretarial groups where 60% of the women in the public service are employed; on the professional, scientific and technical groups where advancement for women lags; on non-traditional occupations generally. More emphasis should be placed on finding practical and flexible solutions to problems of balancing work and family responsibilities.

It will take improvements in all these areas to keep the Equity Index moving from its present level of 49 towards the point at which it reflects gender balance (100), and to reduce the concentration that now finds three quarters of the women in the public service in only four occupational groups.

We strongly recommend regular reporting of progress: to ministers, to deputies, to members of the public service and to the public.

These reports should stand alone as reports on the progress in achieving the three goals to which we have recommended that the Government declare its commitment: eliminating compression, reducing concentration and improving representation at the top.

Numerical targets and quotas received a very bad press in the interviews and in the questionnaire. Those who apparently had benefited from them resented the implication that they needed them to get ahead, and those who did not qualify for them and who did not get ahead often ascribed their fate to targets and quotas.

A support staff member had this to say:

Being made an exception to the rule breeds tension and hostility... you have to work harder and better to prove your worth while developing an unfair and undeserved reputation.

A middle-aged male executive wrote:

Quotas do not work, a systems solution will not work. Managers are very adept at side-stepping systems to get what they want. Somehow, managers must develop a commitment to change. A good manager can walk around the system, but one committed manager will do more than all the systems.

For the purposes of Phase II we prefer the broader goals and indicators of progress described above.

Recommendation 3: Systems

None of our recommendations about systems are new. They have been made before in the previous reports on issues related to our terms of reference. What's more, many of the issues on which we intend to make recommendations are even now under intense study by the task forces working on the Public Service 2000 initiative described in Chapter 9. We will keep our recommendations in this area brief, and concentrate on discussing their relevance to the findings of our report.

In Chapter 7 we outline what was described to us by one manager as "an affirmative action program that really works." This is affirmative action for former uniformed personnel, from the armed forces, the RCMP and CSIS. By virtue of Section 2 (2) of the *Public Service Employment Act*, they are able to compete in internal competitions that are otherwise open only to members of the public service. As the numbers show, this brings, each year, significant numbers of former military personnel into occupational groups and at levels that have a negative effect on opportunities for advancement for public servants.

We believe this should be stopped. There is no doubt that many able people have come into the public service by this means; but they could have come in through open competition, and many provisions exist to help managers who need to bring in a specially qualified person without delay.

The last time this recommendation was made — in the 1979 D'Avignon *Report on Personnel Management and the Merit Principle* — the subsequent public discussion appeared to confuse special entry for all members of the uniformed services with the long-standing Veterans' Preference program which gives absolute priority for appointment to veterans in any competition for which they qualify. This is covered by a different section of the *Public Service Employment Act*. Its effect is no longer very great and we do not suggest that it be disturbed.

We are mindful that representation of woman in the armed forces is improving and that therefore in due course some of the beneficiaries of the special entry program might be women. This does not alter our **recommendation — that Section 2 (2) should be deleted from the *Public Service Employment Act*.**

Another section of Chapter 7 drew attention to compensation problems which affect the utility of some measures intended to provide for the balancing of work and family responsibilities.

We recommend that the necessary steps be taken to enable part-time workers to become contributors to the public service pension plan.

Improved arrangements should be made for a longer pay-back period for employees returning from care and nurturing leave who must repay their contributions and those of the employer for the period of their absence. Care should be taken to ensure that satisfactory arrangements are in place before the leave begins.

We recommend that the classification system should be over-hauled to shift it to a skills basis and to reduce stereotyping in the description and classification of jobs. This is essential in tackling the problem of concentration. We had useful discussions on this point with representatives of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) and the Professional Institute of the Public Service (PIPS) and we recommend that their detailed knowledge of this matter be drawn upon.

We are aware that a task force chaired by the Deputy Minister of Public Works has been examining this as part of the Public Service 2000 project referred to in Chapter 9. Their work should focus on the particular problems with the classification system reflected in this report.

Steps should be taken to ensure that channels for movement between groups and categories are clear and that bridging positions are available where they are needed to overcome barriers.

The procedures involved in staffing should be combed through to remove unnecessary complications and make the whole process more transparent.

Barriers to application on promotional competitions should be reduced.

In such a large system, some method is necessary to ensure that managers are not spending all their time on selection boards, and it is also necessary to consider future promotability when staffing a position. Using paper qualifications, especially those with respect to education, to limit access to competitions where they are not, in a practical sense, required, has a negative effect on the promotion prospects of competent women, particularly in the mid-levels of occupational groups where women are over-represented.

Developmental training for support staff should be encouraged rather than inhibited.

The whole question of access to educational leave and payment for leave of all kinds should be reviewed. We were surprised at the findings of the questionnaire survey on these matters, but did not have time remaining in our mandate to pursue them further, by, for example, examining leave records.

A selective but serious program of exit interviews should be launched, particularly in those groups and levels highlighted in this report. When the question of “leavers” arose, we were surprised to find that we could not go to records of such interviews but had instead to trace leavers and arrange for the necessary interviews.

Particular attention should be paid to the high concentration of women in term, and especially short-term, employment. The Public Service Commission has been doing some analysis of this problem. It should be further examined by managers throughout the public service.

Renewed efforts should be made to use the appraisal system more directly to encourage, enlighten, and advise employees about realistic career options.

Taking these steps may reduce some of the barriers affecting women that appear to be system-related. But by far the most significant barriers identified by our research were those related to attitudes and corporate culture.

Recommendation 4: Attitudes and Corporate Culture

There is plenty of evidence that society as a whole has been changing its attitudes to women in the work force — but not very fast and by no means completely. Attitudes are hard to change and so is the culture of corporations, whether public or private sector. **A deliberate and sustained effort will be required to bring about the changes needed to achieve the goals of Phase II. We recommend that the public service undertake such an effort.**

The public service has embarked on such undertakings in the past: for example, an effort by departments and agencies dealing directly with the public to increase their awareness of public expectations and improve service to the public; and an effort to introduce a collegial management style in departments with widespread operations who needed to be sensitive to local situations.

It is a somewhat different matter to set about changing attitudes of public servants to each other, but it is essential; and to the extent that attitudes resist change, behaviour may respond to a corporate culture that specifically welcomes women to all occupations and at all levels.

The first essential to changing attitudes and cultures is understanding the attitudes and cultures that already exist, and their consequences. **We believe that this report will be a useful tool with which to develop such understanding and we hope it will be used within the public service for that purpose.**

Many of the women we interviewed told us that the hardest attitudes to deal with were those that were unconscious. Most men, they felt, were “baffled, but game”; willing, even anxious, to function appropriately in a workplace moving towards gender balancing, but unsure what this involved. Some were already comfortable with the changes taking place; some were insecure and hostile. Women had the same range of degrees of comfort in the gender-balanced workplace.

We recommend open discussion of the issues and of the goals to which the public service is committed.

The Government has already embarked on an effort to make some changes in its corporate culture.

As J.L. Manion, then Deputy Clerk of the Privy Council, said in a November 1988 address to the Canadian Public Personnel Management Association:

The profile of our human resources has changed. The baby boomers — highly educated, raised in a society of affluence, more orientated toward individualistic values, more conscious of their needs, and perhaps more assertive, less apt or willing to function in a command-and-control mode — now form a large proportion of our work force.

A new management training centre for senior public servants, the Canadian Centre for Management Development has been established under the direction of Mr. Manion. **We recommend that the implications for management of the information provided in this report be fully integrated into the training programs presented at the Centre — not treated as a side issue.** Mr. Manion and his staff have already indicated an interest in our research and its results.

We do not present ourselves as experts in either attitudinal training or management development. These are both well-developed disciplines and our annotated bibliography (Volume 4) contains references to the many current studies of corporate change and the reduction to the barriers to the

advancement of women. However, we believe (like most of the men and women we interviewed) that mentors and role models are the best teachers.

We therefore recommend that care be taken to recognize and reward managers, both men and women, who demonstrate positive attitudes and exemplify management styles that contribute to the achievement of the goals of Phase II.

In this chapter we have addressed the last of our tasks: to tell the President of the Treasury Board what we believe he and his colleagues can do to break the glass ceilings in the public service, open up the pink ghettos, and support the appointment of women to key positions.

We have proposed the initiation of Phase II of the development of a public service that is equitably balanced to allow the full use of talents of both men and women.

What will it cost?

We are not recommending spending for new programs — we urge a new perspective on what is already being done.

The federal government is already managing a labour force required to carry on public business. It is already committed to the principle of equality in the workplace. It has already begun the application of pay equity. It already carries out analysis and projection of its future requirements for human resources. It already issues reports on the pay and composition of the public service. It has already established a new management training facility.

We are concerned with how these functions are carried out, not with the establishment of new ones.

Some of the systems improvements may involve cost: pensions for part-time workers, longer payback for contributions on return from care and nurturing leave, more developmental training for support staff, a serious program of exit interviews, accelerated action on day-care and pay equity.

But the pay-off, over 20 years, appears likely to be on the order of a 5% increase in productivity. That will more than offset any of the costs involved in a serious attempt to achieve gender balance throughout the Public Service of Canada.

ANNEX 1

The Bureaucratic Machinery

To understand how public servants advance, it is helpful to know how the system works. This annex explains how several of the key systems function and how they relate to each other.

The bureaucracy functions by means of several interconnected systems. The group and level of a job is determined by the *classification system*; the incumbent is hired by the *staffing system*; this may involve the *priority system* and the *appeal system*; the employee then makes use of the *training and development system* and their performance is monitored by the *appraisal system*. And throughout their career, the employee is no doubt making use of the *informal system* that functions within the public service as in any large organization.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: WHO DOES WHAT?

Several government agencies play key roles in personnel management in the public service. These include the Treasury Board, the Public Service Commission, the Public Service Staff Relations Board, the Canadian Human Rights Commission and the Privy Council Office. The following is a brief overview of the main roles and responsibilities of these organizations.

Treasury Board (TB) is the contractual employer of public servants, and is therefore deeply involved in many areas of human resource management.

The Board oversees the organization and size of the public service by allocating “person-years” (PYs) and “complement.” Every position requires an approved person-year before it can be filled. If the position is to be filled at the Senior Management (SM) or Executive (EX) level, it also requires a complement. These allocations cannot be exceeded, but managers retain

some flexibility with respect to how they are used. For example, a director general who has a total establishment of 100 person-years and 10 complement can hire 100 permanent employees, 10 of whom are at the Senior Management or Executive level; or 90 permanent employees and 20 part-time employees working half-days. In each case, any 10 of the positions may be at the Senior Management or Executive levels.

It is Treasury Board that develops and implements government-wide policies in the areas of human resource planning (including employment equity), staff training and development, compensation, classification, staff relations and official languages.

In the area of classification, the Board also develops classification standards, certifies classification officers, audits the classification activities that have been delegated to departments (on behalf of the Public Service Commission) and participates in the settlement of classification grievances.

Staff relations is another area in which the Board, as employer, is very active. The Board negotiates and interprets collective agreements, participates in the settlement of grievances in arbitration and sets standards for discipline, working conditions and workplace health and safety.

The Board determines pay plans and conditions of employment for “excluded” employees — those who are not part of a public service union.

The Board derives its authority in these matters from a number of pieces of legislation including the *Financial Administration Act*, the *Public Service Superannuation Act* and the *Official Languages Act*.

The Public Service Commission (PSC) was originally created to ensure fairness and impartiality in the treatment of public servants, particularly in matters relating to staffing. It is the guardian of the “Merit Principle” — the system intended to ensure that public servants advance according to their demonstrated skills, experience and abilities. Most of its authority derives from the *Public Service Employment Act* (PSEA).

The Commission develops and implements government-wide policies on staffing, and sets selection standards and tests in a number of areas, including linguistic abilities and special assessments.

In its human resource planning and training role, the Commission provides career counselling, succession planning, course development and training in a wide variety of fields, including language training. It administers special development programs such as the Career Assignment Program (CAP) and the International and Executive Interchange programs.

The Commission's primary role remains that of staffing. To that end, it analyzes the public service's demand for skills as well as the available labour market. It administers a number of employee inventories, including those for employment equity target groups and employees seeking transfers to other departments, as well as external inventories for those seeking to enter the public service. The Commission delegates staffing authority and provides an advisory service to departments. It selects and appoints employees in all other cases, including the Management Category.

The Public Service Staff Relations Board (PSSRB) is an independent agency responsible for administering the *Public Service Staff Relations Act*. This includes responsibility for the resolution of disputes over collective agreements, the settlement of grievances and the arbitration process.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) administers the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. This includes responsibility for investigating complaints of discrimination within the public service, and, in certain cases, within private-sector corporations.

The Privy Council Office (PCO) advises the Prime Minister on appointments made by order-in-council (OIC). Under this procedure individuals are appointed directly to a post on the authority of the Prime Minister, and therefore not subject to the usual rules of competition applied by the PSC. All such appointments are published in the *Canada Gazette* after approval by the Governor General and subject to public scrutiny. OIC appointments are generally made to senior positions within the federal public service, such as deputy minister positions, as well as to boards and commissions. Judges and heads of posts abroad are also appointed by this procedure.

THE MACHINERY

The process by which people enter the public service and advance within it is governed by a number of procedures. These are best defined as a series of interconnecting systems.

The Classification System

Positions in the public service are categorized according to the nature of the work required. The first division is into occupational categories. There are six of these: the Management Category, the Scientific and Professional Category, the Administrative and Foreign Service Category, the Technical Category, the Administrative Support Category and the Operational Category. Each category contains a number of occupational groups, which involve specific occupations within the general area of the category. Each occupational group is then divided into classification levels; most groups have between three and five levels. In any group, higher levels normally carry higher degrees of responsibility and authority and, of course, higher rates of pay. Entry-level employees are usually recruited into the lowest level, which is sometimes a special developmental level. Career progression then involves promotion to successive levels, although many public servants also move from group to group as their careers progress.

The process of classifying a job starts with the preparation of a detailed written statement of the duties and responsibilities of the job — a job description. This is usually prepared by the manager of the job to be classified, with or without the help of a classification officer.

The written description of duties should present a clear idea of the nature of the job. Is it a secretarial job, or a janitorial job? Do the functions require a detailed knowledge of purchasing procedures, or experience in running a printing press? Will the incumbent be required to supervise other employees? To write well? To make presentations? Will the job involve frequent travel? Will the incumbent be subject to any physical risk?

When all relevant information has been set down, the job description is submitted to a classification committee, usually made up of two or three individuals with knowledge of the type of job to be classified, plus a personnel officer to oversee proper application of the rules. This committee

determines the occupational group to which the job belongs, and the job's classification level, which in turn determines the salary range.

To assist them in their work, the classification committee will compare job descriptions against the appropriate classification standard. Many of the currently used classification standards for public service jobs were written in the mid-1970s.

Classification is sometimes used as an expeditious route to advancement. Some individuals have received their last few promotions by having their job reclassified every few years. Reclassification can also be a means of keeping an employee who might otherwise be attracted to greener pastures elsewhere.

The Staffing System

Jobs become vacant for a variety of reasons. People retire, are promoted, take lateral transfers, or resign — most often leaving a vacancy that needs to be filled. In the era of downsizing, positions may be left vacant for long periods of time or abolished altogether when they become vacant. But even in a period of downsizing, some new positions are created, such as those related to the implementation of the new Goods and Services Tax. Some positions, such as those related to a one-time event, like Expo '86, may be created for a specific period of time only.

Priority Clearance

The first step in the process of filling a vacancy is to determine whether or not there are any individuals available who have a priority for appointment. Several groups have priority in the federal public service. Employees returning from leave of absence have first priority for appointment to vacant positions. Ministers' staff who meet certain criteria are next in line for priority appointment to positions for which they are qualified. Employees who have been laid off have next priority and must be appointed if they qualify or can be trained to qualify for the vacancy within a one-year period.

The process of getting priority clearance, although helpful when resulting in appointment, can be a long one, requiring a lot of a manager's time in

reading résumés, interviewing candidates and providing detailed justifications of refusal in cases where the priority candidate does not qualify. It can also cause morale problems if employees are repeatedly denied the opportunity to compete for a position because of priority appointments.

If priority clearance is received, the manager has several options. If the department has not met its targets with respect to the four groups designated under the employment equity program (women, the disabled, aboriginal peoples and visible minorities) the manager, in developing lists of candidates, may decide to request referrals from inventories that are maintained for these groups. Employees who are interested in a lateral transfer either within the department or throughout the public service may also be considered at this point.

Should these and other options be unsuccessful, the next route to consider is the competition process.

The Search for Candidates

Although the public service has devised a number of methods for identifying qualified candidates — including a sophisticated high-tech computer application called MRIS (Management Resource Information System) — the traditional and still most commonly used method of advertising a vacancy is by printing and distributing a competition poster. This poster, usually a single page, gives details of the available position, including the classification (group and level, with salary details), the language requirements of the job, and a summary of the duties and responsibilities. By means of a network of facsimile transmission units across the country, the government printing office is able to produce the posters simultaneously in all major Canadian cities.

Public servants looking for a new job normally scan the posters regularly. When a poster appears advertising a position that seems suited to their experience and skills and meets their personal needs (location, salary band, etc.) employees take the next step in the process: they submit a job application.

The process described above is known as a “closed” competition — meaning that it is open only to public servants. If such a process seems unlikely to find qualified candidates within the system, an “open” competition — one that is open to members of the general public — may be held. Term positions are usually filled by way of “open” competitions. This attracts applicants looking for a foot in the door to the public service. If they win a competition for a term position, they are eligible to apply for “closed” competitions during their term. Many hope to use this method to find a permanent position.

Screening Candidates

Applications are submitted to the staffing officer charged with running the competition. Staffing of most jobs has been delegated to departments. The notable exception is the staffing of Management Category jobs, which remains the prerogative of the PSC. The staffing officer will first examine applications to make sure that candidates possess the qualifications listed on the poster. Those who do not meet these criteria are normally screened out at this stage. Candidates who pass this stage of the screening may be invited to present themselves for consideration.

With an eye to filling vacant positions quickly and efficiently, managers may use the screening process to keep the number of candidates to a minimum. For example, a position may have its language requirements increased to the highest level on an “imperative” basis. This means that employees who would not meet the required level of linguistic competence without language training are not eligible for further consideration.

All applicants who meet the basic qualifications for a position are supposed to receive an interview. In cases where there are many applicants to choose from, a manager may “rate” the candidates — establishing an order of merit that ranks candidates from the most to the least qualified. The manager will then interview only “the best” candidates, rather than all the candidates who meet the basic requirements.

Educational requirements can also be used at the discretion of management. It is not unusual to see AS-1 (junior administrative officer) positions

advertised as requiring a bachelor of arts degree. Such a requirement is almost impossible to justify for a position at that level, but it is an effective way to keep the number of candidates to a minimum.

Candidates in federal offices outside of the national capital region are often disadvantaged when applying for positions in the Ottawa area. In many cases, depending on the level of the position, competitions are open only within the geographic area in which the job is located. Or there may be a requirement for “headquarter’s experience” without which they will not be called to interview. Further, a manager with a limited budget is not motivated to bring a candidate to Ottawa for an interview when faced with the possibility of having to pay removal expenses if the candidate is successful. This is particularly true in cases where an individual has been filling the position on an acting basis, and is doing so to the entire satisfaction of the manager. There is little incentive to cast a wide net.

The Selection Board

The final selection is most often made by a board. The board usually consists of the manager of the position, a second officer at a similar level who has broad knowledge of the duties of the job to be filled, and a staffing officer responsible for overseeing fair application of the rules of competition. They ask candidates a number of questions relating to the job, and score their responses according to a pre-arranged scoring schedule. Candidates are also rated for other aspects of their presentation, including “personal suitability” — a term which can sometimes be interpreted quite freely. There may also be a requirement to complete a written or practical test.

The candidate scoring the highest marks in the selection process is normally offered the job. Other candidates may be ranked in order of their scores, and may be offered other similar positions at a later date, or the job itself if the board’s first choice turns down the offer.

The Appeal Process

After a decision is made by a selection board, a Notice of Right to Appeal is issued announcing the name of the successful candidate(s). If a losing candidate feels that the selection board has made an unfair appraisal, they may launch an appeal against the proposed appointment. If such an appeal is

made, staffing of the job can be delayed until the appeal has been heard and a decision rendered. The unsuccessful candidate is allowed to present any evidence of unfairness before an appeal board and may be represented by the union where appropriate. The appeal board will also hear the evidence of the selection board, often represented by a staffing officer, before making a decision. The appeal board has the power to overturn the findings of the selection board and to rule that all or part of a competition be done over. If the appeal is dismissed, the proposed appointment can proceed.

There is also allowance in the system for appointments without competition. In these cases, an appeal notice is posted (except for promotions within the Management Category) to allow any would-be candidates to protest. In fact, this is rarely done since there is little to be gained by crossing a manager for whom the employee might one day want to work. Again, the risk of being penalized for an action far outweighs the chance of winning the position if the manager is forced, by the appeal, to run a new competition.

The Training and Development of Public Servants

Most new appointees must serve a probationary period on appointment, usually six to twelve months. During the employees' term of service in the job, they will probably require, and are entitled to receive training and/or development from their employer.

"Training" refers to instruction required by an employee to do the current job. This includes courses to correct an identified deficiency, to respond to changes in the demands of the job (for example, to learn how to use new technology) or to assist a new employee in becoming familiar with the required skills.

"Development" refers to any courses, skills training or other education that prepares an employee for future advancement.

Training and development may be delivered by the employee's department, to which most such training has been delegated; by the PSC, which continues to offer training courses of general interest to the public service at large; or by any other approved source such as community colleges, etc. The specific type of training can vary from classroom courses to on-the-job training.

The opportunities offered by developmental or “stretch” assignments are popular in many departments. In these, the employee is given a specific task, usually with a sharply defined deadline and budget, which does not form part of their normal day-to-day activities. Such assignments may include working on special task forces, committees or study groups. Some high-level training programs blend classroom training and developmental assignments to obtain the best of both worlds. Such schemes include:

- *Secondments*, which have no legislative base, are administrative agreements whereby a manager agrees to “lend” an employee to another manager for a specified period of time (often up to two years) with the employee’s agreement. Secondments can be used between departments, but cannot be used to promote an individual. These arrangements have several advantages. With all-party agreement, they can be done very quickly, priority clearance is not required and they are not subject to appeal (unless an opinion as to prejudicial effect is sought). They can be a useful way of providing an employee with broader experience and of filling a vacancy quickly. They can also, however, be a source of discouragement for those employees who were looking forward to competing for the position.
- *Acting Appointments* are used to fill a position on a temporary basis when a position is vacant or the incumbent is absent on leave. Short-term acting appointments are excellent opportunities to develop new skills and gain exposure. Longer-term acting appointments provide an excellent entrée to winning a position on a permanent basis.
- The *Special Assignment Pay Plan* (SAPP), which allows individuals to be placed, at their current level, in an area where they can gain new and varied experience. These developmental assignments are largely “on-the-job” opportunities, but they may include more formal education. SAPPs are sometimes used to allow an individual who is close to retirement to familiarize the eventual replacement with the ins-and-outs of the position before they leave.

- The *Temporary Assignment Pool* (TAP), which is a group of senior employees who are assigned by the Treasury Board to duties anywhere in the federal public service. This provides variety and exposure for the assigned individual and allows a department to take advantage, on a temporary basis, of skills and knowledge that they might otherwise be lacking.
- The *Career Assignment Program* (CAP), which is designed to identify high-potential, mid-level officers and groom them for entry into the Management Category. Nominees to the program must pass a rigorous screening process, which includes in-residence aptitude testing. Successful candidates then follow a program of residential classroom tuition followed by a series of developmental assignments.

Performance Appraisal

It is a necessary and important part of management to determine how well employees are performing their tasks. This information is key to establishing what training they may need. It is also crucial to deciding whether an employee has the potential to advance, when, and at what rate. In some cases, performance pay (an increase in salary based on the level of performance) is directly linked to the degree to which an employee has performed well. While this is a regular, on-going responsibility of all levels of management, the federal bureaucracy also makes use of a formal, tightly-defined annual exercise known as the Performance Appraisal and Review System.

Essentially, the performance of an employee is rated by the supervisor against a series of specified factors. The supervisor is first required to rate the employee's success in completing the objectives specified in the previous year's appraisal. At the same time, managers establish the objectives for the upcoming year. If the objectives have been stated in specific terms (stay within budgets and deadlines; produce a quantity of output), this stage of the exercise can be almost automatic. Next, the supervisor must comment on a number of aspects of the employee's performance, including any demonstrated weaknesses, any identified training requirements, immediate readiness for promotion and longer-term potential. At the end of the form, which runs to several pages of text, the supervisor must rate the employee's

overall performance on a scale that runs from “unsatisfactory” at the low end through “satisfactory”; “fully satisfactory”; “superior”; and for the top performers, “outstanding” at the upper end of the scale.

In theory, the completed performance appraisal form is at the heart of many aspects of public servants’ working lives. It determines the short-term training they will receive, and it affects long-term career planning. It allows them to identify any deficiencies in their performance and to receive whatever help they may need to overcome them. It allows the manager to identify unsatisfactory performers and take steps to improve their performance or to remove them. It allows the organization to identify superior performers, so that it can take appropriate steps to reward and advance them. It allows for planning and budgeting of upcoming training.

In practice, the process often has severe limitations. Many employees and managers do not take the process seriously. Some employees are routinely asked to write their own appraisals. Training recommendations are not necessarily followed up. Excellent appraisals may be given to mediocre employees to help them find new employment; mediocre appraisals may be given to excellent employees to reduce their chances of leaving.

The appraisal system for all Management Category employees and others on performance pay has a built-in quirk. The number of individuals who can be appraised as “superior” or “outstanding” is limited by a ceiling established on the amount of money available for performance pay, and by a guideline set for the percentage of employees who can be rated at more than “fully-satisfactory” in any given year. Employees must often “take turns being superior” in alternate years in an attempt to be fair to everyone.

ANNEX 2

Stages of Discrimination and Non-Competing Groups

PROFESSOR STEPHEN G. PEITCHINIS

Department of Economics, The University of Calgary

Economists who have addressed the issue of employment discrimination, such as Gary Becker, Edmund Phelps, Barbara Bergmann, and Lester Thurow, have sought to explain the rationale for discriminatory practices, and the market conditions that make discriminations possible. Since a market economy is presumed to operate on free movements of demand and supply, the existence of discriminatory practices raises two important questions: one is why employers discriminate; and the other is why do the discriminated accept discrimination.

By definition, discrimination exists when the equally productive are given unequal rewards, and when the equal in qualifications and potential are given unequal opportunities.

The question to be answered is what market conditions must exist to cause the discriminated to accept unequal rewards, and to cause those with equal qualifications and potential to accept unequal opportunities. The answer is that the entire market must be similarly discriminatory. Otherwise, the discriminated will move out of the discriminating market and into the non-discriminating, except for those who can offset the cost of discrimination with alternative utilities.

For example, a number of studies have categorized employment into three sector groups, each group offering different terms and conditions of employment. The employees of each group have indicated commitment to the goals of their sectors, which means the differential terms and conditions

of employment are offsetting. The three sector groups are: the “for Profit Sector,” the “not-for-Profit Sector,” and the “Government Sector.”

I should like to focus briefly on the stages of discrimination. That is, on when people are most likely to experience discrimination. This is highly significant, since in many instances discrimination at one stage preconditions for subsequent discriminations. The rules and regulations in effect within the employment structure, the classification systems used, the degrees of rigidity in the administration of employment within those systems, and the decisions made in the management of the employment structures, all have the potential to create non-competing groups within the employment structure.

There are three stages of discrimination:

The first stage of discrimination is at the pre-labour market stage: This is the stage preparatory to labour market entry; the stage during which significant amounts of human capital are invested in people, and the stage during which critical decisions are made on the nature of preparation for labour market activity.

Two kinds of discriminatory acts take place at this stage, which in many instances have lifetime work implications: (1) **One is the discriminatory occupational counselling** given to young people, and the corresponding discriminatory educational and training programmes to which they are directed. This has been the most critical stage for women. Occupational counselling limited their direction to occupations deemed appropriate for women, and the corresponding educational and training programmes were designed to facilitate efficient performance in the “appropriate” occupations — the humanities, the caring occupations, and the ancillary office occupations. (2) **The second discriminatory act at this pre-labour market stage** is the differential quantities of human capital invested in young people, because of different capacities to access human capital. Differential access to education and training imposed by differences in financial capacities of families and by differences in availability of programmes across the nation, constitute implicit social discrimination.

The combination of these two discriminatory acts — entry into discriminated educational and training programmes, and relatively limited investment in human capital — have tended to lock people into segregated occupational groups over their lifetime of work.

The second stage of discrimination is the employment queue stage: This is the stage when potential employees — new entrants into the labour market — in effect queue up for employment opportunities, and employers pick off the queue those with “appropriate employment characteristics.”

Whatever the outcome of the first stage, in nature of education and training, in personal development, in achievements and contacts, will bear on the outcome of the second stage.

Excepting certified occupational specialists, such as nurses and teachers, most new entrants into the labour market join the employment queue as candidates for training, for whatever job vacancies may arise, and for whatever job vacancies the employer may deem them suitable.

The opportunity for discrimination is very wide here: The “appropriate employment characteristics” can range from the specific, such as the level of education and training to “relevant experience, facility with verbal and/or written communication, physical characteristics, quality of the academic record and academic institution in which it was attained, demonstrated aptitudes, potential for training, and many others. **The greater the intent to discriminate the more specific to the characteristics of those whom the employer wishes to hire become the job characteristics.**

Discrimination **in favour** emphasizes the unique features of the work functions involved in the job, and the rare qualification required of candidates for appointment; whereas discrimination **for confinement** merely details the range of work functions to be performed.

The most critical negative outcomes of discriminatory practices at the queues involve those who are not picked off the queues for which they have the appropriate qualifications in the first and second rounds. After a certain interval, they begin **queue jumping** to less and less desirable queues, for

possible vacancies that are less and less appropriate to their qualifications. We have observed this to be a very common experience with many women graduates with majors in economics.

Such forced queue jumping by the discriminated leads to four negative outcomes: one is, **the failure to test the potential** of people who have been screened by academic institutions and certified for having successfully completed certain specified programmes. The queues they initially join reflect those certifications. **The second** negative outcome is the possible underutilization of the productive capacities of those people. We may never know how trainable and how proficient they may have been in higher level positions, relative to those who were picked off in their stead. **The third** negative outcome is the tendency of the discriminated **to crowd** into the less and less desirable, terminal employments. **And the fourth** negative outcome is the tendency of wages and other terms and conditions of employment to become depressed in the crowded employments.

The third stage of discrimination is within the enterprise. What the enterprise does with those it picks off the different queues: (1) the jobs it gives them, (2) the training programmes it provides them, (3) the opportunities for demonstration of initiative and proficiency it affords them.

Advancement within the individual occupational classifications in the enterprise and within the enterprise employment pyramid largely depends on decisions on those three matters: the jobs to which people are assigned; the training they are given; and the opportunities they are afforded to demonstrate their capacities.

The Harvard economist John Dunlop characterized the employment processes within enterprises as “internal labour markets,” in the sense that the processes are similar to the processes of the general market — entries and exits, competition for jobs, training and retraining, wage and salary structures in part administered by largely market determined, occupational structures, advancements, demotions, mobility, and others — a microcosm of the general labour market.

But, he added a **critical element** to the characterization, which separates, and in some respects, even insulates the internal market from developments in the external market. That element is the management of the internal labour market by a “complex set of rules which determines the movement of workers among job classifications within administrative units ...”.¹

Rules do not determine, of course. Human decisions do. The attribution of determination to rules and regulations is often designed to escape responsibility for decisions and indecisions under the rules and regulations, and for failures to change rules and regulations that may be discriminatory.

People allocate job responsibilities; **people** decide who will be trained, in what, for how long, where, by whom, for what; **people** provide opportunities for the demonstration of potential; and **people** assess performance and potential. **Rules are designed to confine the discriminated. The favoured are taken out of the confines of the rules-governed job classifications and placed on different tracks.** How objective and gender-neutral are the selection decisions?

The critical questions on this relate to the criteria used in decisions to confine and advance, and the criteria used in decisions to advance on fast track, slow track, and no track. Gary Becker suggested an element of prejudice enters into some decisions based on perceived preferences of consumers and co-workers.² The perception that people prefer to be served by men in certain activities and by women in others, will influence decisions on both the classification of men and women within the occupational hierarchy, and the respective prices they command. For example, if consumers have a preference for men lawyers for criminal and corporate cases, and a preference for either men or women lawyers for civil and family law cases, women will tend to be relegated to family law work, which is commonly at the lower levels of the occupational structure, and which yields lower returns. Becker's thesis is that under such preference regimes, law firms which assign women

1 “Job Vacancy Measures and Economic Analysis,” The Measurement and Interpretation of Job Vacancies, NBER, 1966: p. 32.

2 Gary Becker, *The Economics of Discrimination*, 2nd edition, The University of Chicago Press, 1971.

to criminal and corporate cases would have to bear the cost of the consumer's preference for men lawyers by accepting a discounted fee. As long as such consumer "taste for discrimination" prevails, law firms will tend to discriminate against their women lawyers in the assignment of cases, which will hold women at the lower levels of the occupational structure, and their pay relatively depressed. This is offered as a partial explanation for the observed crowding of women at the lower levels of occupations traditionally associated with men, such as law, medicine, accounting, and management.

In addition to the three stages of discrimination outlined above, a question exists on whether the occupational classifications system is gender-biased, and therefore discriminatory. Are occupational classifications gender-biased? Close to 80% of women in employment are clustered in about 20 of the 400 or so occupational classifications listed by Statistics Canada. About 70% are in the secretarial/clerical, retail sales and service, general services and in operative employments. And, significantly, even in those few employment classifications in which they are clustered, few women occupy the senior supervisory and managerial positions.

Gender-bias is suggested by the degrees of flexibility in work functions of jobs held by men and women, and by the degrees to which occupational classifications are open-ended or closed. An examination of inter-occupational mobility gives the impression that men experience lesser difficulty in getting out of their occupational classifications and compete in higher classifications than women do. In other words, **while men are in competing occupational groups, and move inter-occupationally, women appear to be confined in non-competing occupational groups and thereby limited to intra-occupational mobility.** Application of this experience to the employment pyramid would mean limited inter-occupational mobility at the lower levels of the pyramid, which are predominantly occupied by women, and substantial inter-occupational mobility at the higher levels of the pyramid, which are occupied predominantly by men.

The same general principle applies also to all occupational categories in which women are employed throughout the pyramid. The occupational classifications to which women are assigned tend to be those which do not lend to inter-occupational mobility. Even at the highest levels of the pyramid the work functions assigned to women seem designed to hold them within their classifications. Is this classification-bias or selective discrimination?

